MANUAL OF COMPOSITION AND RHETORIC

GARDINER, KITTREDGE AND ARNOLD

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MANUAL OF

COMPOSITION AND RHETORIC

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PREFACE

The present volume has been prepared to meet the needs of those teachers and students who require a manual of Composition and Rhetoric somewhat fuller, and rather more advanced, than the same authors' "Elements of English Composition." Much of the matter in the two books is the same, but the "Manual" differs from the "Elements" in arrangement,[1] and it takes up the several subjects in greater detail and carries them farther. It also contains a large quantity of new material.

Part I is devoted to the Forms of Discourse, — Narration, Description, Exposition (or Explanation), and Argument, with a special chapter on the Drama. It presents these subjects in their natural order; indicates their relations to each other, as well as to literature in general and to the experience of the student; and illustrates them by means of carefully selected extracts from a great variety of writers, both English and American.[2] The student is led to see that the methods which he tries to follow in his own composition are, and must be, identical *in kind* with the methods by which distinguished writers have produced those effects which please or impress him in his reading. Thus the study of literature is brought to the assistance of practice in composition without being improperly subordinated to it, and practice in composition is made really serviceable in the development of literary appreciation.

Exposition is treated with a fulness proportionate to its importance in everyday life. Expository description is carefully distinguished from pure or "literary" description, — that is, from description that aims to reproduce the writer's impressions of

[1] In particular, all the Exercises have been put after the several chapters (see pp. 78 ff., 134 ff., 200 ff., 260 ff., 308 ff., 341 ff., 413 ff., 421 ff.).

[2] See "Selections" in the Index.

the scene or the object. Particular attention is given to Arrangement of Material, and there are plain directions for collecting and sifting material and drawing up outlines.

Argument, in response to requests from many teachers, has also been treated with considerable fulness. In order that the making of Briefs may not seem an end in itself, — as if it were a mere trick of ingenuity in tabulation, — the connection between the Brief and the necessary logical structure of the argument is dwelt on and exemplified. Five Specimen Briefs are appended to the chapter, along with a body of exercises which make practical application of the principles discussed. How much of this chapter shall be utilized by any particular class of students, will of course depend on their stage of advancement and their special needs. In a subject like argument, fulness of treatment ensures proportion, and, by clearing up the difficulties, really works toward simplicity.

A short chapter on the Drama will be found at the end of Part I. Experience proves that students, though they are required to read a good deal of Shakspere, often fail to discriminate between narrative method and dramatic method. The importance of the distinction, and the confusion which failure to recognize it works in the study of literature, will, it is believed, justify the inclusion of this chapter, though the subject is not usually treated in text-books of composition. Other portions of the book which are closely connected with the study of literature, as well as with composition, are, for example, the sections on Literary Criticism, the Uses of Incident, Complication of Plot, and the Narrative in Literature.

Part II takes up the Paragraph, the Sentence, and the Choice of Words. These subjects have been incidentally referred to, as occasion required, in Part I; for it is assumed that the student will not come to a manual of this kind without some training in the rudiments. In Part II, however, they are systematically discussed in their relations to the art of composition. Part II is, in effect, a treatise on rhetorical technique. The discussion, however, is not formal, but practical, and the doctrines are set forth

in their relation to literature as such, and to the everyday experiences of the student. The difficult subject of Transition is discussed with a fulness of illustration which it is hoped may render it less puzzling than students commonly find it. Mention may also be made of the summary of Forms of the Paragraph, which is meant for reference, to the definition and explanation of the Standard of Usage, and to the sections on Figures of Speech.

Particular attention is invited to the treatment of Improprieties in Language. It is a common practice of writers on rhetoric to set forth these faults in a long list, thus introducing the student to a multitude of errors which he might otherwise have been under no temptation to commit. The unwisdom of this plan is clear enough and has been demonstrated over and over again by experience. The authors of the present book have therefore followed a different method. The standard of usage is defined, and the four main principles of choice (correctness, precision, appropriateness, and expressiveness) are fully explained and illustrated; but the correction of specific improprieties is left to the teacher, who will, of course, note these faults when they occur in the student's writing or conversation, and thus adapt his instruction to the actual needs of the individual. In the Supplementary Exercises, however, a number of the commonest improprieties are discussed, and to these is added an unusually full list of words that are often loosely or incorrectly employed (see pp. 440–442). This list will help the teacher in his criticism of the students' essays, and will also afford material for a great variety of lessons in verbal discrimination. Its judicious use will accomplish far more than can be effected by a study of the conventional catalogues of improprieties, and will not corrupt the pupil's English in the attempt to purify it.

For convenience, a list of solecisms has been included in the Appendix (pp. 443–450). Here, too, care has been taken to avoid, so far as possible, the actual printing of bad English.

The Summary of Phrases and Clauses (pp. 451–458) is for reference in connection with the study of sentences, as well as for purposes of grammatical review.

The exercises, both analytic and constructive, are numerous and varied. In conformity with the plan of the book, they aim to bring the practice of composition into its proper relation both to the pupil's experience and everyday interests and to his study of good literature.

The authors are indebted to Professor W. M. Davis for permission to print an extract from his "Physical Geography"; to The Macmillan Company for permission to print a chapter from Sir John Lubbock's "Beauties of Nature"; to Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons for allowing the use of several passages from Stevenson (including an extract from "Ebb Tide") and of one from Dr. Van Dyke; to Messrs. Longmans, Green & Company for an extract from Mr. Weyman; to the Century Company for Mr. Riis's anecdote of John Binns; to the Lothrop, Lee, & Shepard Company for extracts from stories by Miss Wilkins; to Messrs. D. Appleton & Company for an extract from Mr. F. T. Bullen; to Mr. Joseph C. Lincoln for an extract from his "Cap'n Eri"; to Professor W. T. Sedgwick for an extract from "The Human Mechanism"; and to Dr. W. J. Long for an extract from "The School of the Woods." Extracts from Hawthorne and Mr. John Burroughs are used by permission of Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Company, publishers of the works of those authors. Extracts from "Putnam's Edition of Irving" are used by permission of Messrs. G. P. Putnam's Sons, Irving's authorized publishers. Particular acknowledgment is due to Professor W. F. M. Goss, of Purdue University, who has not only allowed the authors to reprint a chapter from his recent treatise on "Locomotive Sparks" (New York, John Wiley & Sons), but has given them liberty to adapt it to their purpose by a slight simplification of technicalities. The story of "Rumpelstiltskin" is taken from the excellent translation of Grimm by Margaret Hunt (London, George Bell & Sons).

In conclusion, the authors wish to express their indebtedness to several experienced teachers for valuable suggestions, and, in particular, their gratitude to Professor Frank Edgar Farley, of Simmons College, for scholarly help of every kind, especially in the chapter on Argument.

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Part I

THE FORMS OF DISCOURSE

Part I

THE FORMS OF DISCOURSE

CHAPTER I

COMPOSITION IN GENERAL

TWO KINDS OF COMPOSITION

The **study of composition** is useful both for practical purposes, as a means of learning to write, and for the help which it gives in understanding and appreciating literature. The reason for this twofold advantage is plain. **Rhetoric,** or the art of writing, is not governed by arbitrary laws. Its rules are not statutes passed long ago by some assembly of critical scholars; they are merely common-sense principles derived from the observed practice of persons who have succeeded in writing well, — that is, from the methods of good authors. Hence, when we study composition, we investigate these methods, in order to apply them in our own writing. Such study naturally makes us understand the authors better, and better understanding heightens our appreciation.

In studying composition, therefore, we must keep both objects in view. We must aim to arrive at rules or practical directions for our own guidance, and we must analyze, to some extent, the means employed by great authors in achieving results which are beyond our powers.

A student is not expected to write sonnets like Milton's and Wordsworth's, or short stories like "The Fall of the House of Usher," or romances like "The House of the Seven Gables"; but this should not deter him from trying to discover the qualities which make such works admirable. "It is not everybody," says an eminent critic, "who can command the mighty rhythm of the greatest masters of human speech. But every one can make reasonably sure that he knows what he means, and whether he has found the right word."

Most of the writing that we have to do falls into two classes, of which two kinds of letters are the commonest types.

In a **business letter** our purpose is to give information, to explain a subject with which we are familiar to some one who does not understand it, or to express our opinion on some practical matter. Such a letter may be quite impersonal. Its essential quality is clearness.

In a **familiar letter,** on the other hand, we are concerned with our own thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Our object is not primarily to give information, but rather to make our subject as interesting to our correspondent as it is to us. Such a letter is personal and individual. Its essential qualities are vividness and interest.

To be sure, many business letters are personal, and a familiar letter may of course concern a matter of business. No sharp distinction can be made between the two kinds of correspondence. The general difference, however, is as here set forth, and nothing more is necessary for our present purpose, which is illustrative merely.

These two classes of letters, then, are examples of the two kinds of writing which everybody has to do, sooner or later. In the first kind, we should ask ourselves, "Have

I explained all the facts clearly?" In the second, "Have I interested my reader in what interests me?" Under the first head come such pieces of composition as written "tests" at school, and all those essays or reports in which the main object is to inform the reader. Under the second head comes every piece of composition in which we aim chiefly at interesting others in our own feelings or experiences, as in stories or in descriptions of places or persons. In literature, the first class would include scientific works, many essays on instructive topics, speeches on matters of fact (as in debates), and all books which set forth general principles for the conduct of life or for the understanding of the universe. In the second class belong stories, literary descriptions, all poetry that appeals to the imagination, and what we call "lighter literature."

This distinction between the two general classes of writing is of some importance. Before we write anything, we should think whether our chief aim is to **make some fact clear** or to **arouse interest,** and we should arrange and handle our material according to this main purpose. Yet we should not infer that every composition is confined to one or the other class; in many cases the purposes may be combined. In particular, we should remember that to be instructive one is not obliged to be dull.

THE FOUR FORMS OF DISCOURSE

Thus all literature may be roughly but conveniently divided into two great classes, according as its main object is (1) to instruct the reader or (2) to interest him. This is a classification with respect to the **purpose of the author.** Literature, however, may also be classified in another way,

— with respect to the different **forms of composition** which it includes. These are four in number, — **narration, description, exposition** (or explanation),[1] and **argument.** They are known as the **four forms of discourse.**

We shall discover, as we proceed, that the four forms of discourse are not entirely distinct from each other. Narration and description, for example, are frequently combined, and most arguments contain a good deal of explanatory (or expository) matter. Yet, on the whole, there is little difficulty in referring any given piece of writing to the class to which it most appropriately belongs. Accordingly, we shall find it profitable to take up each form of discourse by itself, in order to ascertain the principles and methods that should guide us in the practical work of composition and to grasp them firmly.

At the outset, however, we must consider two points which are of primary importance in every kind of composition, — **clearness of thought** and **adaptation to the reader.**

CLEARNESS OF THOUGHT

Before beginning any piece of composition, you should know exactly what you wish to say. Something has been gained when you have found a good **title.** If the title is vague or obscure, the chances are that your thoughts are not clear and well-defined. Besides, since the title introduces your subject to the reader, it should express your theme plainly, and should be so phrased as to attract his attention and arouse his interest. Great authors sometimes give their books titles that hint at the subject in a

[1] *Exposition* and *explanation* are almost exactly synonymous. Though the former is generally used in works on rhetoric, it has no substantial difference in meaning from the latter.

riddling fashion (as in Ruskin's "Sesame and Lilies"). Young writers, however, will do well to speak plainly.

A subject may be stated in **general** or in **specific** terms. Thus, one may write about "War," or "The Battle of Bannockburn." The first is a general, the second a specific subject. Unless your knowledge and experience fit you to discuss the larger theme, it would be more modest and more sensible to limit the field and announce the specific subject. "Plays and Games" may serve as a title for an essay by a writer who has long been interested in athletics and who has a broad view of the principles involved and the various applications of those principles. "What I Know about Tennis" would state more clearly your own experience, and would have the value of a frank personal contribution. Your composition may be even more interesting than that of a famous athlete. At all events, to state the subject of your essay appropriately and honestly will enlist the interest and sympathy of your readers.

Further, a concrete, specific subject is in itself more interesting to the ordinary reader. "A Scotch Collie" is a better subject for a boy's composition than "The Intelligence of Dumb Animals." The boy may clearly and fully discuss the one, while he would hardly do justice to the other. More than this, the reader will be interested in the particular dog from the start, while statements about dumb animals in general may seem vague and pointless, and may therefore fail to arouse his interest.

Whenever we look at the volumes in a bookseller's window, or consult a library catalogue, some titles pique our curiosity at once. Our own experience, then, teaches us the value of a well-chosen title. If we compare the titles in the following list, we shall find no difficulty in

deciding, in each case, which of the two sounds more interesting, and also which of them is more likely to be treated clearly and definitely by a young writer.

1. Foreign Travel.
   Afoot in Scotland.
2. My Likes and Dislikes.
   My Pet Aversion.
3. Peace.
   The Hague Tribunal.
4. Statesmanship.
   The Life of Washington.
5. Experiments in Cookery.
   My First Loaf of Bread.
6. A Pleasant Summer.
   My Vacation at Bear Camp.
7. A Thrilling Rescue.
   How Dick Saved the Train.
8. Literature
   My Favorite Story.

Nobody would maintain, of course, that the more specific titles are better *in themselves* than the general ones. Great essayists like Bacon and Emerson do not hesitate to discuss such large subjects as "Death," "Empire," "Friendship," "Art," and "Heroism."

Whether the subject that you have chosen is large or small, you should **have your thoughts in order** before you begin your composition. More bad writing springs from inexact and disorderly thinking than from any other source.

Every one understands what it is to have a comfortable sense of familiarity with a subject, and then, when he tries to speak or write, to find that he can give no satisfactory account of his knowledge. This means that his supposed familiarity was merely a vague acquaintance with the subject, not a well-ordered body of information. Suppose, for example, you should undertake to describe an automobile offhand. Unless you are well acquainted with such vehicles, you would soon discover that your information is defective and your ideas too hazy to be of any service to your reader. If, on the other hand, you have actually studied the mechanism of an automobile and have arranged your ideas on the subject, you may be able to write a

useful and interesting essay. Read Newman's "Definition of a Gentleman,"[1] and see how clearly and definitely he must have thought out his ideas on this uncertain topic before he began to write. We may learn the same lesson from Washington's "Farewell Address." Here, again, large and elusive matters are discussed with a firmness and a precision that come only from exact and orderly thinking.

In the case of "A Tale of Two Cities," we know that Dickens was meditating on the idea of the book for more than a year before he began it. Even then, it must have required all his constructive skill to carry the main plot — the story of Lucie Manette and Charles Darnay — clearly and strongly through all the complications of the novel, never allowing the main thread to become entangled with the minor threads (the story of the Defarges, of Dr. Manette, of the Evrémonde family, etc.). Narration, then, no less than other forms of writing, demands a lucidity that is impossible without a firm grasp on all the material and a fine sense of the relative importance of details.

Before you begin to write, therefore, be sure that you know just what you wish to write about, that you know something about your subject, and that your ideas about it are clear and well arranged.

ADAPTATION TO THE READER

There is still another question which every writer should ask himself before he begins: "**For whom** am I writing?" or "**To whom** is my composition addressed?"

If he is to write of baseball to one who already knows how to play the game, he will of course not take the

[1] Pp. 399–400, below.

trouble to describe the bat and the ball, or to explain how the bases are arranged. He will come at once to some question of skilful playing, on which even experts may have different views. If, on the other hand, he is to describe the game to an English boy, who may never have heard of it, he must begin at the beginning.

In literature we constantly recognize the importance of adaptation to the reader. Very few children's books interest older people; and, on the other hand, we can all remember the time when "Ivanhoe" and "Silas Marner" did not hold our attention. As our interests multiply, we come to know and to like more and more subjects; and as we read about those subjects we want books which go into them more thoroughly. Hence the books that men read cover a wide range, since each is adapted to the tastes and the knowledge of a special age or class.

Finally, the language which a writer uses must be adapted to the reader, no less than the subject and the contents of his work. We use simple language to children, both in speaking and in writing. Adults can understand and appreciate a more mature form of expression. No one would explain a newly invented machine to an audience of expert mechanics in the same words that he would employ if he were addressing an audience of lawyers or business men.

In every case, therefore, you should consider your readers. Make up your mind what they are likely to know of the subject already, and how it can be made interesting to them. Then adapt your writing to their needs and their tastes.

CHAPTER II

NARRATION

In studying **narration** we shall need to have constantly before us a number of specimens, illustrating the great variety, both of **subject-matter** and of **form**, which this kind of composition shows. Seven such specimens are therefore given at the outset (pp. 12–29).[1]

The first specimen, "My First Day in Philadelphia," is an extract from Franklin's "Autobiography." It is a straightforward story of everyday experience, written in a simple and forcible style.

The second, "The Story of a Fire," by Mr. Jacob Riis, gives a vivid account of an exciting incident in the life of a great city.

The third, "Rumpelstiltskin," is an example of the best kind of fairy tale,—that which has come down to us from old times by a long course of oral tradition. Such traditional nursery tales differ from modern imitations — of which there are many — in their unconsciousness of art and in having no moral lesson to teach. They are stories pure and simple, told for their own sake.

The fourth, "Moses and the Green Spectacles," is an extract from Goldsmith's "Vicar of Wakefield," a novel based on a simple, retired manner of life. It has much lively conversation, and the characters are brought out with delicacy and humor.

The fifth, Scott's "Lochinvar," is a short story in verse, full of action, rapid in its movement, and told with the highest spirit.

The sixth, "The Battle of Bannockburn," from Scott's "Tales of a Grandfather," gives an account of an important historical event in simple, dignified language. It is written with a high degree of narrative skill.

[1] The specific treatment of narration begins on p. 29.

The seventh, "Australian Superstition," by Sir George Grey, is a true story, taken from a famous book of travel and adventure in a wild region.

These seven specimens of narration should be carefully read by the student; for they will be continually cited in the discussion that follows (pp. 29 ff.).[1]

I. MY FIRST DAY IN PHILADELPHIA

By Benjamin Franklin

I have been the more particular in this description of my journey, and shall be so of my first entry into that city, that you may in your mind compare such unlikely beginnings with the figure I have since made there. I was in my working dress, my best clothes being to come round by sea. I was dirty from my journey; my pockets were stuffed out with shirts and stockings, and I knew no soul, nor where to look for lodging. I was fatigued with travelling, rowing, and want of rest; I was very hungry, and my whole stock of cash consisted of a Dutch dollar and about a shilling in copper. The latter I gave the people of the boat for my passage, who at first refused it, on account of my rowing; but I insisted on their taking it, a man being sometimes more generous when he has but a little money than when he has plenty, perhaps through fear of being thought to have but little.

Then I walked up the street gazing about, till, near the market-house, I met a boy with bread. I had made many a meal on bread, and, inquiring where he got it, I went immediately to the baker's he directed me to, in Second Street, and asked for biscuit, intending such as we had in Boston; but they, it seems, were not made in Philadelphia. Then I asked for a threepenny loaf, and was told they had none such. So, not considering or knowing the difference of money, and the greater cheapness nor[2] the names of his bread, I bade him give me threepenny-worth of any

[1] Other specimens of narration will be given from time to time as occasion requires.

[2] This use of *nor* is hardly in accordance with present usage, but was proper in Franklin's time.

sort. He gave me, accordingly, three great puffy rolls. I was surprised at the quantity, but took it, and, having no room in my pockets, walked off with a roll under each arm, and eating the other. Thus I went up Market Street as far as Fourth Street, passing by the door of Mr. Reed, my future wife's father; when she, standing at the door, saw me, and thought I made, as I certainly did, a most awkward, ridiculous appearance. Then I turned and went down Chestnut Street and part of Walnut Street, eating my roll all the way, and, coming round, found myself again at Market Street wharf, near the boat I came in, to which I went for a draught of the river water; and, being filled with one of my rolls, gave the other two to a woman and her child that came down the river in the boat with us and were waiting to go farther.

Thus refreshed, I walked again up the street, which by this time had many clean-dressed people in it, who were all walking the same way. I joined them, and thereby was led into the great meetinghouse of the Quakers near the market. I sat down among them, and, after looking round a while and hearing nothing said, being very drowsy through labor and want of rest the preceding night, I fell fast asleep, and continued so till the meeting broke up, when one was kind enough to rouse me. This was, therefore, the first house I was in, or slept in, in Philadelphia.

II. THE STORY OF A FIRE[1]

By Jacob A. Riis

Thirteen years have passed since, but it is all to me as if it had happened yesterday, — the clanging of the fire-bells, the hoarse shouts of the firemen, the wild rush and terror of the streets; then the great hush that fell upon the crowd; the sea of upturned faces with the fire glow upon it; and up there, against the background of black smoke that poured from roof and attic, the boy clinging to the narrow ledge, so far up that it seemed humanly impossible that help could ever come.

[1] From "The Century," Vol. LV, p. 483 (by permission of The Century Company).

But even then it was coming. Up from the street, while the crew of the truck-company were laboring with the heavy extension ladder that at its longest stretch was many feet too short, crept four men upon long, slender poles with cross-bars, iron-hooked at the end. Standing in one window, they reached up and thrust the hook through the next one above, then mounted a story higher. Again the crash of glass, and again the dizzy ascent. Straight up the wall they crept, looking like human flies on the ceiling, and clinging as close, never resting, reaching one recess only to set out for the next; nearer and nearer in the race for life, until but a single span separated the foremost from the boy. And now the iron hook fell at his feet, and the fireman stood upon the step with the rescued lad in his arms, just as the pent-up flame burst lurid from the attic window, reaching with impotent fury for its prey. The next moment they were safe upon the great ladder waiting to receive them below.

Then such a shout went up! Men fell on each other's necks, and cried and laughed at once. Strangers slapped one another on the back with glistening faces, shook hands, and behaved generally like men gone suddenly mad. Women wept in the street. The driver of a car stalled in the crowd, who had stood through it all speechless, clutching the reins, whipped his horses into a gallop and drove away, yelling like a Comanche, to relieve his feelings. The boy and his rescuer were carried across the street without any one knowing how. Policemen forgot their dignity and shouted with the rest. Fire, peril, terror, and loss were alike forgotten in the one touch of nature that makes the whole world kin.

Fireman John Binns was made captain of his crew, and the Bennett medal was pinned on his coat on the next parade day.

III. RUMPELSTILTSKIN[1]

Once there was a miller who was poor, but who had a beautiful daughter. Now it happened that he had to go and speak to the king, and, in order to make himself appear important, he said to him, "I have a daughter who can spin straw into gold."

[1] From Margaret Hunt's translation of "Grimm's Household Tales" (London, George Bell & Sons).

The king said to the miller: "That is an art which pleases me well. If your daughter is as clever as you say, bring her to-morrow to my palace, and I will try what she can do."

When the girl was brought to him, he took her into a room which was quite full of straw, gave her a spinning-wheel and a reel, and said, "Now set to work, and if by to-morrow morning early you have not spun this straw into gold during the night, you must die." Thereupon he himself locked up the room, and left her in it alone. So there sat the poor miller's daughter, and for her life could not tell what to do. She had no idea how straw could be spun into gold, and she grew more and more miserable, until at last she began to weep.

All at once the door opened, and in came a little man, and said, "Good evening, Mistress Miller. Why are you crying so?"

"Alas!" answered the girl, "I have to spin straw into gold, and I do not know how to do it."

"What will you give me," said the manikin, "if I do it for you?"

"My necklace," said the girl.

The little man took the necklace, seated himself in front of the wheel, and "whirr, whirr, whirr!" three turns and the reel was full; then he put another on, and "whirr, whirr, whirr!" three times round, and the second was full too. And so it went on until the morning, when all the straw was spun, and all the reels were full of gold.

By daybreak the king was already there, and when he saw the gold he was astonished and delighted, but his heart became only more greedy. He had the miller's daughter taken into another room full of straw, which was much larger, and commanded her to spin that also in one night if she valued her life. The girl knew not how to help herself, and was crying, when the door again opened, and the little man appeared, and said, "What will you give me if I spin the straw into gold for you?"

"The ring on my finger," answered the girl.

The little man took the ring, again began to turn the wheel, and by morning had spun all the straw into glittering gold.

The king rejoiced beyond measure at the sight, but still he had not gold enough; and he had the miller's daughter taken into a still larger room full of straw, and said: "You must spin this, too, in the course of this night; but if you succeed, you shall be my wife."

"Even if she be a miller's daughter," thought he, "I could not find a richer wife in the whole world."

When the girl was alone, the manikin came again for the third time, and said, "What will you give me if I spin the straw for you this time also?"

"I have nothing left that I could give," answered the girl.

"Then promise me, if you should become queen, your first child."

"Who knows whether that will ever happen?" thought the miller's daughter; and, not knowing how else to help herself in this strait, she promised the manikin what he wanted, and for that he once more spun the straw into gold.

When the king came in the morning, and found all as he had wished, he took her in marriage, and the miller's pretty daughter became a queen.

A year after, she had a beautiful child, and she never gave a thought to the manikin. But suddenly he came into her room, and said, "Now give me what you promised." The queen was horror-struck, and offered the manikin all the riches of the kingdom if he would leave her the child. But the manikin said, "No, something that is living is dearer to me than all the treasures in the world." The queen began to weep and cry, so that the manikin pitied her.

"I will give you three days' time," said he. "If by that time you find out my name, then shall you keep your child."

So the queen thought the whole night of all the names that she had ever heard, and she sent a messenger over the country to inquire, far and wide, for any other names that there might be. When the manikin came the next day, she began with "Caspar," "Melchior," "Balthazar," and said all the names she knew, one after another; but to every one the little man said, "That is not my name." On the second day she had inquiries made in the neighborhood as to the names of the people there, and she repeated to the manikin the most uncommon and curious: "Perhaps your name is Shortribs, or Sheepshanks, or Laceleg?" but he always answered, "That is not my name."

On the third day the messenger came back again, and said: "I have not been able to find a single new name, but as I came to a high mountain at the end of the forest, where the fox and the hare bid each other good night, there I saw a little house,

and before the house a fire was burning, and round about the fire quite a ridiculous little man was jumping: he hopped upon one leg, and shouted —

"'To-day I bake, to-morrow brew,
The next I'll have the young queen's child.
Ha! glad I am that no one knew
That Rumpelstiltskin I am styled.'"

You may think how glad the queen was when she heard the name! And when soon afterwards the little man came in, and asked, "Now, Mistress Queen, what is my name?" at first she said, "Is your name Conrad?" "No." "Is your name Harry?" "No."

"Perhaps your name is Rumpelstiltskin?"

"The devil has told you that! the devil has told you that!" cried the little man, and in his anger he plunged his right foot so deep into the earth that his whole leg went in; and then in rage he pulled at his left leg so hard with both hands that he tore himself in two.

IV. MOSES AND THE GREEN SPECTACLES

By Oliver Goldsmith

As the fair happened on the following day, I had intentions of going myself; but my wife persuaded me that I had got a cold, and nothing could prevail upon her to permit me from home. "No, my dear," said she, "our son Moses is a discreet boy, and can buy and sell to very good advantage. You know all our great bargains are of his purchasing. He always stands out and higgles, and actually tires them till he gets a bargain."

As I had some opinion of my son's prudence, I was willing enough to intrust him with this commission; and the next morning I perceived his sisters mighty[1] busy in fitting out Moses for the fair, — trimming his hair, brushing his buckles, and cocking his hat with pins. The business of the toilet being over, we had at last the satisfaction of seeing him mounted upon the colt, with a deal box before him to bring home groceries in. He had on a coat made of that cloth they call thunder-and-lightning, which,

[1] This adverbial use of *mighty* was formerly common in good writers, but is now obsolete except in very informal conversation.

though grown too short, was much too good to be thrown away. His waistcoat was of gosling green, and his sisters had tied his hair with a broad black riband. We all followed him several paces from the door, bawling after him, "Good luck! good luck!" till we could see him no longer.

He was scarcely gone when Mr. Thornhill's butler came to congratulate us upon our good fortune, saying that he overheard his young master mention our names with great commendation.

Good fortune seemed resolved not to come alone. Another footman from the same family followed, with a card for my daughters, importing that the two ladies had received such pleasing accounts from Mr. Thornhill of us all that, after a few previous inquiries, they hoped to be perfectly satisfied.

"Ay!" cried my wife, "I now see it is no easy matter to get into the families of the great; but when one once gets in, then, as Moses says, one may go to sleep."

To this piece of humor — for she intended it for wit — my daughters assented with a loud laugh of pleasure. In short, such was her satisfaction at this message that she actually put her hand in her pocket and gave the messenger sevenpence halfpenny.

This was to be our visiting day. The next that came was Mr. Burchell, who had been at the fair. He brought my little ones a pennyworth of gingerbread each, which my wife undertook to keep for them, and give them by little at a time. He brought my daughters also a couple of boxes, in which they might keep wafers, snuff, patches, or even money, when they got it. My wife was unusually fond of a weasel-skin purse, as being the most lucky; but this by the by.[1]

* * * * * * * *

I changed the subject by seeming to wonder what could keep our son so long at the fair, as it was now almost nightfall.

"Never mind our son!" cried my wife. "Depend upon it he knows what he is about. I'll warrant we shall never see him sell his hen of a rainy day. I have seen him buy such bargains as would amaze one. I'll tell you a good story about that, that will make you split your sides with laughing. But, as I live, yonder comes Moses, without a horse, and the box at his back."

[1] The omitted passage gives an account of the way in which the Vicar and his family spent their time during the absence of Moses.

As she spoke, Moses came slowly on foot, and sweating under the deal box, which he had strapped round his shoulders like a peddler.

"Welcome, welcome, Moses! Well, my boy, what have you brought us from the fair?"

"I have brought you myself," cried Moses, with a sly look, and resting the box on the dresser.

"Ay, Moses!" cried my wife, "that we know; but where is the horse?"

"I have sold him," cried Moses, "for three pounds, five shillings, and twopence."

"Well done, my good boy!" returned she. "I knew you would touch them off. Between ourselves, three pounds, five shillings, and twopence is no bad day's work. Come, let us have it, then."

"I have brought back no money," cried Moses again. "I have laid it all out on a bargain, and here it is" — pulling out a bundle from his breast. "Here they are, — a gross of green spectacles, with silver rims and shagreen cases."

"A gross of green spectacles!" repeated my wife, in a faint voice. "And you have parted with the colt, and brought us back nothing but a gross of paltry green spectacles!"

"Dear mother," cried the boy, "why won't you listen to reason? I had them a dead bargain, or I should not have bought them. The silver rims alone will sell for double the money."

"A fig for the silver rims!" cried my wife, in a passion. "I dare swear they won't sell for above half the money at the rate of broken silver, five shillings an ounce."

"You need be under no uneasiness," cried I, "about selling the rims, for they are not worth sixpence; for I perceive they are only copper varnished over."

"What," cried my wife, "not silver! — the rims not silver!"

"No," cried I, "no more silver than your saucepan."

"And so," returned she, "we have parted with the colt, and have only got a gross of green spectacles, with copper rims and shagreen cases. A murrain take such trumpery! The blockhead has been imposed on, and should have known his company better."

"There, my dear," cried I, "you are wrong; he should not have known them at all."

"Marry, hang the idiot!" returned she, "to bring me such stuff. If I had them I would throw them into the fire."

"There again you are wrong, my dear," cried I; "for, though they be copper, we will keep them by us, as copper spectacles, you know, are better than nothing."

By this time the unfortunate Moses was undeceived. He now saw that he had indeed been imposed upon by a prowling sharper, who, observing his figure, had marked him for an easy prey. I therefore asked the circumstances of his deception. He sold the horse, it seems, and walked the fair in search of another. A reverend-looking man brought him to a tent, under pretence of having one to sell. "Here," continued Moses, "we met another man, very well dressed, who desired to borrow twenty pounds upon these, saying that he wanted money and would dispose of them for a third of their value. The first gentleman, who pretended to be my friend, whispered to me to buy them, and cautioned me not to let so good an offer pass. I sent for Mr. Flamborough, and they talked him up as finely as they did me, and so at last we were persuaded to buy the two gross between us."

V. LOCHINVAR

By Sir Walter Scott

O, young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
Through all the wide border his steed was the best;
And save his good broadsword he weapons had none,
He rode all unarmed, and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He stayed not for brake, and he stopped not for stone,
He swam the Eske river where ford there was none;
But, ere he alighted at Netherby gate,
The bride had consented, the gallant came late:
For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war,
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he entered the Netherby hall,
Among bride's-men, and kinsmen, and brothers, and all:
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword, —

For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word, —
"O come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar?"

"I long woo'd your daughter, my suit you denied;
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide;
And now I am come, with this lost love of mine,
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far,
Who would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar."

The bride kissed the goblet: the knight took it up,
He quaffed off the wine, and he threw down the cup.
She looked down to blush, and she looked up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips, and a tear in her eye.
He took her soft hand, ere her mother could bar, —
"Now tread we a measure!" said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace;
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume,
And the bride-maidens whispered, "'T were better by far
To have matched our fair cousin with young Lochinvar."

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reached the hall door where the charger stood near;
So light to the croup the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung!
"She is won! we are gone, over bank, bush, and scaur;
They 'll have fleet steeds that follow," quoth young Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Græmes of the Netherby clan;
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they ran;
There was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lee,
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.
So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

VI. THE BATTLE OF BANNOCKBURN[1]

By Sir Walter Scott

King Edward the Second assembled one of the greatest armies which a king of England ever commanded. There were troops brought from all his dominions. Many brave soldiers from the French provinces which the king of England possessed in France, — many Irish, many Welsh, — and all the great English nobles and barons, with their followers, were assembled in one great army. The number was not less than one hundred thousand men.

King Robert the Bruce summoned all his nobles and barons to join him, when he heard of the great preparations which the king of England was making. They were not so numerous as the English by many thousand men. In fact, his whole army did not very much exceed thirty thousand, and they were much worse armed than the wealthy Englishmen ; but then, Robert, who was at their head, was one of the most expert generals of the time ; and the officers he had under him were his brother Edward, his nephew Randolph, his faithful follower the Douglas, and other brave and experienced leaders, who commanded the same men that had been accustomed to fight and gain victories under every disadvantage of situation and numbers.

The king, on his part, studied how he might supply, by address and stratagem, what he wanted in numbers and strength. He knew the superiority of the English, both in their heavy-armed cavalry, which were much better mounted and armed than that of the Scots, and in their archers, who were better trained than any others in the world. Both these advantages he resolved to provide against. With this purpose, he led his army down into a plain near Stirling, called the Park, near which, and beneath it, the English army must needs pass through a boggy country, broken with watercourses, while the Scots occupied hard, dry ground. He then caused all the ground upon the front of his line of battle, where cavalry were likely to act, to be dug full of holes, about as deep as a man's knee. They were filled with light brushwood, and the turf was laid on the top, so that it appeared a plain field, while in reality it was all full of these pits,

[1] From " Tales of a Grandfather."

as a honeycomb is of holes. He also, it is said, caused steel pikes, called calthrops, to be scattered up and down in the plain, where the English cavalry were most likely to advance, trusting in that manner to lame and destroy their horses.

When the Scottish army was drawn up, the line stretched north and south. On the south, it was terminated by the banks of the brook called Bannockburn, which are so rocky that no troops could attack them there. On the left, the Scottish line extended near to the town of Stirling. Bruce reviewed his troops very carefully; all the useless servants, drivers of carts, and such like, of whom there were very many, he ordered to go behind a height, afterwards, in memory of the event, called the Gillies' Hill, that is, the Servants' Hill. He then spoke to the soldiers, and expressed his determination to gain the victory, or to lose his life on the field of battle. He desired that all those who did not propose to fight to the last should leave the field before the battle began, and that none should remain except those who were determined to take the issue of victory or death, as God should send it.

When the main body of his army was thus placed in order, the king posted Randolph, with a body of horse, near to the church of St. Ninian's, commanding him to use the utmost diligence to prevent any succors from being thrown into Stirling Castle. He then despatched James of Douglas, and Sir Robert Keith, the Mareschal of the Scottish army, in order that they might survey, as nearly as they could, the English force, which was now approaching from Falkirk. They returned with information that the approach of that vast host was one of the most beautiful and terrible sights which could be seen, — that the whole country seemed covered with men-at-arms on horse and foot, — that the number of standards, banners, and pennons (all flags of different kinds) made so gallant a show that the bravest and most numerous host in Christendom might be alarmed to see King Edward moving against them.

It was upon the 23d of June (1314) the king of Scotland heard the news, that the English army were approaching Stirling. He drew out his army, therefore, in the order which he had before resolved on. After a short time, Bruce, who was looking out anxiously for the enemy, saw a body of English cavalry trying to get into Stirling from the eastward. This was the Lord Clifford,

who, with a chosen body of eight hundred horse, had been detached to relieve the castle.

"See, Randolph," said the king to his nephew, "there is a rose fallen from your chaplet." By this he meant that Randolph had lost some honor by suffering the enemy to pass where he had been stationed to hinder them. Randolph made no reply, but rushed against Clifford with little more than half his number. The Scots were on foot. The English turned to charge them with their lances, and Randolph drew up his men in close order to receive the onset. He seemed to be in so much danger, that Douglas asked leave of the king to go and assist him. The king refused him permission.

"Let Randolph," he said, "redeem his own fault; I cannot break the order of battle for his sake." Still the danger appeared greater, and the English horse seemed entirely to encompass the small handful of Scottish infantry. "So please you," said Douglas to the king, "my heart will not suffer me to stand idle and see Randolph perish. I must go to his assistance." He rode off accordingly; but long before they had reached the place of combat, he saw the English horses galloping off, many with empty saddles.

"Halt!" said Douglas to his men. "Randolph has gained the day; since we were not soon enough to help him in the battle, do not let us lessen his glory by approaching the field." Now that was nobly done, — especially as Douglas and Randolph were always contending which should rise highest in the good opinion of the king and the nation.

The van of the English army now came in sight, and a number of their bravest knights drew near to see what the Scots were doing. They saw King Robert dressed in his armor, and distinguished by a gold crown, which he wore over his helmet. He was not mounted on his great war-horse, because he did not expect to fight that evening. But he rode on a little pony up and down the ranks of his army, putting his men in order, and carried in his hand a sort of battle-axe made of steel. When the king saw the English horsemen draw near, he advanced a little before his own men, that he might look at them more nearly.

There was a knight among the English called Sir Henry de Bohun, who thought this would be a good opportunity to gain great fame to himself, and put an end to the war, by killing

King Robert. The king being poorly mounted, and having no lance, Bohun galloped on him suddenly and furiously, thinking, with his long spear and his tall powerful horse, easily to bear him down to the ground. King Robert saw him, and permitted him to come very near, then suddenly turned his pony a little to one side, so that Sir Henry missed him with the lance-point, and was in the act of being carried past him by the career of his horse. But as he passed, King Robert rose up in his stirrups, and struck Sir Henry on the head with his battle-axe so terrible a blow that it broke to pieces his iron helmet as if it had been a nutshell and hurled him from his saddle. He was dead before he reached the ground. This gallant action was blamed by the Scottish leaders, who thought Bruce ought not to have exposed himself to so much danger when the safety of the whole army depended on him. The king only kept looking at his weapon, which was injured by the force of the blow, and said, "I have broken my good battle-axe."

The next morning, being the 24th of June, at break of day, the battle began in terrible earnest. The English, as they advanced, saw the Scots getting into line. The Abbot of Inchaffray walked through their ranks barefooted, and exhorted them to fight for their freedom. They kneeled down as he passed, and prayed to Heaven for victory. King Edward, who saw this, called out, "They kneel down, — they are asking forgiveness!" "Yes," said a celebrated English baron, called Ingelram de Umphraville, "but they ask it from God, not from us. These men will conquer or die upon the field."

The English king ordered his men to begin the battle. The archers then bent their bows, and began to shoot so closely together that the arrows fell like flakes of snow on a Christmas day. They killed many of the Scots, and might, as at Falkirk and other places, have decided the victory; but Bruce, as I told you before, was prepared for them. He had in readiness a body of men-at-arms, well-mounted, who rode at full gallop among the archers, and as they had no weapons save their bows and arrows, which they could not use when they were attacked hand to hand, they were cut down in great numbers by the Scottish horsemen, and thrown into total confusion.

The fine English cavalry then advanced to support their archers and to attack the Scottish line. But coming over the ground

which was dug full of pits, the horses fell into these holes, and the riders lay tumbling about, without any means of defence, and unable to rise from the weight of their armor. The Englishmen began to fall into general disorder; and the Scottish king, bringing up more of his forces, attacked and pressed them still more closely.

On a sudden, while the battle was obstinately maintained on both sides, an event happened which decided the victory. The servants and attendants on the Scottish camp had, as I told you, been sent behind the army to a place afterwards called the Gillies' Hill. But when they saw that their masters were likely to gain the day, they rushed from their place of concealment with such weapons as they could get, that they might have their share in the victory and in the spoil. The English, seeing them come suddenly over the hill, mistook this disorderly rabble for a new army coming up to sustain the Scots, and, losing all heart, began to shift every man for himself. Edward himself left the field as fast as he could ride. A valiant knight, Sir Giles de Argentine, much renowned in the wars of Palestine, attended the king till he got him out of the press of the combat. But he would retreat no farther. "It is not my custom," he said, "to fly." With that he took leave of the king, set spurs to his horse, and calling out his war-cry of "Argentine! Argentine!" he rushed into the thickest of the Scottish ranks, and was killed. The young Earl of Gloucester was also slain, fighting valiantly. The Scots would have saved him; but, as he had not put on his armorial bearings, they did not know him, and he was cut to pieces.

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The English never before or afterwards, whether in France or Scotland, lost so dreadful a battle as that of Bannockburn, nor did the Scots ever gain one of the same importance. Many of the best and bravest of the English nobility and gentry lay dead on the field; a great many more were made prisoners; and the whole of King Edward's immense army was dispersed or destroyed.

The English, after this great defeat, were no longer in a condition to support their pretensions to be masters of Scotland, or to continue, as they had done for nearly twenty years, to send armies into that country to overcome it. On the contrary, they became for a time scarce able to defend their own frontiers against King Robert and his soldiers.

VII. AUSTRALIAN SUPERSTITION[1]

By Sir George Grey

The men slept but little during the night; every now and then one of them visited the hole of mud and water, to see if a little of this fluid had drained into it, and about an hour before daylight I roused them up to proceed upon their journey. They were dreadfully feeble, though upon the whole stronger than they had been for the last three days. We now entered upon a more hilly country than we had traversed yesterday; the hills were steep, being composed of sand and recent limestone, whilst the valleys were thickly wooded with grass-trees and stunted banksias. The general line of route I followed was south by east, and we had not travelled more than nine miles when we came suddenly upon a valley, with a river running rapidly through it. The sight of this cheered us up; and when on tasting the water we found it excellent, and saw adhering to the banks a species of fresh-water mussel, called by the natives *ma-rayl-ya*, our joy was complete.

I proceeded therefore to collect wood for my fire, and ordered Kaiber[2] to make haste and gather some of these mussels, an order which, considering the hungry state he was in, I imagined he would gladly have obeyed; but to my astonishment he refused positively to touch one of them, and evidently regarded them with a superstitious dread and abhorrence. My arguments to induce him to move were all thrown away. He constantly affirmed that if he touched these shellfish, through their agency the *boyl-yas*[3] would acquire some mysterious influence over him, which would end in his death. He could not state a recent instance of any ill effects having happened from handling or catching the mussels; but when I taunted him with this, he very shrewdly replied, that his inability to do so only arose from the fact of nobody being "wooden-headed enough" to meddle with them, and that he intended to have nothing whatever to do with them. This much he assured me was certain, that a very long time ago some natives had eaten them, and that bad spirits had immediately killed them for so doing.

[1] From "Travels in Northwest and Western Australia."

[2] A native Australian who was one of the exploring party led by Grey.

[3] The *boyl-ya* is the native sorcerer.

Kaiber was a great deal too sensible a fellow to be allowed to remain a prey to so ridiculous a superstition as this was. I therefore ordered him instantly to go and bring some of these mussels to me, saying that I intended to eat them, but that he could in this respect please himself. He hereupon, after thinking for a moment or two, got up to obey me, and walked away for this purpose; but I heard him, whilst occupied in the task, lamenting his fate most bitterly. It was true, he said, that he had not died either of hunger or thirst, but this was all owing to his courage and strong sinews, yet what would these avail against the supernatural powers of the *boyl-yas*. "They will eat me at night, whilst, worn out by fatigue, I must sleep." Amidst these and sundry other similar exclamations, he brought the mussels to me. By this time my fire was prepared, and in a few minutes I was making such a meal as the weak state of my stomach would admit of. No inducement of mine could, however, prevail upon Kaiber to share with me, and therefore I handed him the remains of the cockatoo.

As soon as my repast was concluded, I walked about three miles up the river, in the hope of getting a duck, Kaiber accompanying me. We saw several, but killed none. There were some fine reaches in the river, as well as some good flats along its banks.

In the afternoon we travelled about three miles in a south-by-east direction, and then came to the bed of a small stream, which ran from east to west, but was now merely a chain of pools. Across the bed, where we passed it, was a native weir. Our route during the whole evening lay over hills similar to those we passed yesterday. We did not halt until it was so dark that we could not see to walk, and then just dropped at the spot where we ceased to move. The men made their fire, and I lighted mine from theirs; but scarcely was this done ere the rain fell in torrents. I had no blankets or protection of any kind against this, and Kaiber was in the same predicament; so that when the fire was extinguished, our position became pitiable in the extreme, for I know not if I ever before suffered so much from cold; and to add to my annoyance, I every now and then heard Kaiber chattering to himself, under its effects, rather than singing, —

> "O wherefore did he eat the mussels?
> Now the *boyl-yas* storms and thunder make;
> O wherefore would he eat the mussels?"

At last I so completely lost my temper, that I roared out, "You stone-headed fellow, Kaiber, if you talk of mussels again, I'll beat you."

"What spoke I this morning?" replied Kaiber. "You are stone-headed. We shall be dead directly. Wherefore eat you the mussels?"

This was beyond what my patience in my present starved state could endure. So I got up and began to grope about for a stick or something to throw in the direction of the chattering block-head; but he begged me to remain quiet, promising faithfully to make no more mention of the mussels. I therefore squatted down in a state of the most abject wretchedness.

NARRATIVES AND STORIES

Story and **narrative** are synonyms; **narration** and **story-telling** are essentially the same thing. But we naturally make a distinction: a **narrative** is commonly more formal in tone and more serious in purpose than a mere **story**. The distinction is convenient, and it is exact enough for our present needs.

A **story** pure and simple (as distinguished from the more formal **narrative**) aims to reproduce in the reader the thoughts and feelings which the narrator has while he is telling it. We read Stanley's account of his adventures in Africa, or Peary's description of his life in the frozen North, or Franklin's simple and unpretentious "Autobiography," chiefly because of their absorbing interest. We read "Robinson Crusoe" or "Ivanhoe" or Mrs. Gaskell's "Cranford" or Stevenson's "Treasure Island," not for information, but in order to be stirred or amused. Incidentally we may derive instruction from the work, but that is not our main purpose: we are really in search of new experiences such as our everyday life does not afford.

Most **narrative** aims to instruct. Historical narrative, for instance, usually has an explanatory purpose:[1] it does not merely recite certain events; it explains their sequence, their relations, their causes and effects, their bearing on the progress of civilization.

"The Siege of Arcot" (pp. 395–399), for example, is a good story, but it is more than that: it helps to make clear how India was won for the British Empire. So Scott's "Battle of Bannockburn" (pp. 22–26) has its place in his account of the long series of wars between Scotland and England, which ended in the union of the two kingdoms.

Again, a history of the United States does not confine itself to such striking incidents as the Boston Tea Party, or the Evacuation of New York, or the Attack on Fort Moultrie, or the Discovery of Gold in California. It must explain how thirteen separate colonies were welded into a single nation by the Revolutionary War and the adoption of the Constitution, and then how that nation spread across the plains and mountains of the West until it became the great republic of to-day. Some historians, indeed, concern themselves almost exclusively with discussing the formation and development of the Constitution, and barely mention the more exciting and picturesque events which make history interesting to most of us. In such cases, though the **narrative form** is retained, the purpose is mainly **explanatory.**

So the explanation of a mechanical process — like the manufacture of wire nails or the building of a bridge — may take the form of a narrative.

NOTE. — It must not be supposed that every piece of narration can be definitely referred to one or the other of the two classes indicated, — narratives and stories. The distinction consists in a difference of purpose, which induces a corresponding difference in treatment. Literature is not science, and pigeon-hole classification of literary types is not to be encouraged. The story pure and simple may be regarded as one extreme of a

[1] The subject of **explanation** (or **exposition**) will be treated later (pp. 145 ff.). It is here mentioned to enforce the distinction between the two kinds of narrative writing.

series, and unmixed exposition (explanatory writing) as the other. Between these extremes lie an almost infinite number of possible combinations. In particular, the distinction between (1) explanatory narrative and (2) exposition that employs narrative incidentally, is often vague enough. Yet the general distinctions are pretty obvious, and it is these alone that are of any consequence. Too great exactness in these matters begets confusion and thus defeats its own ends.

Stories told in verse differ from prose tales merely because poetry differs from prose. They are ordinarily more imaginative; they pay more attention to pure beauty of expression; and they move on a higher plane of feeling and emotion.[1] The heroes of the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey" pass through the great actions of the story almost on equal terms with the gods and goddesses who weave the tangled web of their fate; the Ancient Mariner lives and suffers in a "light that never was on sea or land"; and "The Passing of Arthur" is clothed in an atmosphere of poetic beauty that would be impossible in prose. The difference cannot be fully defined in words, for it consists rather in a certain intensity and elevation of spirit than in anything concrete and palpable. The charm of metre and the beauty of poetic diction enhance the effect. If, however, the verse is bad, or the writer deficient in poetic power and artistic sense, the metrical form becomes only an annoyance to the reader.

A comparison between "Ivanhoe" and "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" will bring out in a striking way the difference between prose and poetry in narration. Both are romantic and imaginative; both deal with events and characters that are quite beyond the range of our actual experiences. Yet we feel the distinction between them from the very beginning. This distinction depends not merely on the difference in form and rhythm between prose and verse; it depends quite as much on the difference in style, setting or atmosphere, and general tone.

[1] See p. 349 for the characteristics of poetical language.

The **reading of stories** is profitable in a variety of ways, if the stories are good ones. Addison and Goldsmith, Thackeray and Dickens and Hawthorne, and above all Shakspere,[1] had an understanding of human nature and an insight into the springs of human action that give them a place among the great teachers of mankind. They have set forth the life of typical characters in high and memorable relief; so that we, by reading their works, can learn how men and women behave in circumstances that try the soul and test the character, and can see how human actions work out their natural consequences for good or ill.

To **write stories**, even if they are not very good ones, is also a profitable exercise. Without some skill in this art, we cannot relate our own experiences clearly and vividly in a letter to a friend. Practice in writing stories likewise leads us to scrutinize these experiences more carefully, and thus helps us to see more accurately just what is happening to us as we pass through the world. In short, it makes life mean more to us. But, besides these tangible benefits, such practice gives us an insight into the methods of good literature, and so enables us to choose our books better and enjoy them more intelligently. In other words, it cultivates our **critical faculty** and our power of **literary appreciation.**

ACTION IN NARRATION

The essential thing in narration is to make something happen. Indeed, the only difference between a **story** and a **description** is that the description tells *what things are,*

[1] The distinction between narrative and drama will be dwelt on later (see pp. 267–273).

or *where they are,* or *how they look,* and the story tells *what has happened.* **Action,** then, is the prime virtue of a story.

The Bible stories are excellent models in this respect, because they concern themselves almost entirely with action and contain very little description. In the story of David and Goliath, for example, see how much is put into five lines: —

> And it came to pass when the Philistine arose and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth.

Of the sixty-one words in this passage, fourteen are verbs; no unnecessary nouns are used, and there is not a single descriptive adjective. Hence we can hardly strike out a word without taking away from the **action** of the story. The simple structure of the sentences also enhances this effect of rapid and vigorous movement.

The following extract from Hawthorne's "Tanglewood Tales," though in an altogether different style, is equally full of action: —

THE FIGHT WITH THE MINOTAUR

> Without more words on either side, there ensued the most awful fight between Theseus and the Minotaur that ever happened beneath the sun or moon. I really know not how it might have turned out, if the monster, in his first headlong rush against Theseus, had not missed him, by a hair's breadth, and broken one of his horns short off against the stone wall. On this mishap, he bellowed so intolerably that a part of the labyrinth tumbled down, and all the inhabitants of Crete mistook the noise for an uncommonly heavy thunder storm. Smarting with the pain, he galloped around the open space in so ridiculous a way that Theseus laughed at it, long afterwards, though not precisely at

the moment. After this, the two antagonists stood valiantly up to one another, and fought sword to horn, for a long while. At last, the Minotaur made a run at Theseus, grazed his left side with his horn, and flung him down; and, thinking that he had stabbed him to the heart, he cut a great caper in the air, opened his bull mouth from ear to ear, and prepared to snap his head off. But Theseus by this time had leaped up, and caught the monster off his guard. Fetching a sword-stroke at him with all his force, he hit him fair upon the neck, and made his bull head skip six yards from his human body, which fell flat upon the ground.

So now the battle was ended. Immediately the moon shone out as brightly as if all the troubles of the world, and all the wickedness and the ugliness which infest human life, were past and gone forever.

Action in a story of everyday life is well illustrated by "Moses and the Green Spectacles" (pp. 17–20).

The first paragraph starts the story; then comes an amusing account of the "fitting out" of Moses for the fair, and of his riding off, while the family "bawl after him 'Good luck!'" till he is out of sight. Then we hear of the different visitors who enlivened the day during the absence of Moses: their importance is for the later part of the novel, but they keep up the effect of stir and bustle which characterizes the whole incident. Then, after the vicar's momentary wonder at his son's delay, we see Moses approaching, with the deal box on his back. Finally, the point of the story — how Moses has been cheated — is told almost entirely by means of dialogue. But it is dialogue which involves action. Indeed, this part of the story might be *acted* as it stands without the omission of more than two or three sentences, and even these would serve as stage-directions.

Every story, then, should have plenty of action and movement. The action need not be violent or boisterous, and the movement may be either rapid or leisurely, according to the nature of the tale; but unless something *happens*, there can, of course, be no narration. When a story ceases to move, it is in great danger of ceasing to exist.

COHERENCE AND ARRANGEMENT

Action and movement, as has just been said, are the essential things in narration; a story without **incidents** is an impossibility. The incidents, however, must not be disconnected; they must stand in a clear relation to each other. Otherwise the story lacks **coherence,**[1] — that is, it does not "hang together," — and nobody can follow it. To ensure clearness and coherence, the incidents must be **arranged in an orderly way,** so that the story shall move on smoothly and without confusion or interruption.

Thus Franklin (p. 13) does not mention the mother and her child until they are necessary to conclude the incident of the threepenny-worth of rolls. Scott (pp. 22–23) tells how Bruce prepared the ground in front of his line, and how he posted Randolph, before he comes to the battle itself, where everything must move swiftly.

In plain straightforward narration the arrangement almost takes care of itself. Stories should generally be told in the order in which the incidents occurred, — that is, they should follow the **order of time.** This natural order should not be violated except for special reasons. A story should move on with directness and force, like an arrow to the mark. A narrator who is continually going back to pick up broken threads wearies his hearers and soon loses their attention; for nobody will listen long to anything that confuses his mind.

The order of time is especially important in **narrative letters, historical** and **biographical sketches,** and **tales of travel** or **adventure.** In the **drama** it is absolutely imperative. The spectators are supposed to be eyewitnesses. If, therefore, the incidents are to seem real, they must be presented as

[1] To *cohere* (Latin *cohaerēre*) means literally "to stick together."

they would be seen by eyewitnesses, — namely, in the order in which they occurred in life. In a **novel**, on the contrary, certain departures from the natural order of time may be necessary. These we shall study presently, when we take up complication of plot (p. 68).

THE POINT OF A STORY

Action in a story must not be haphazard, without motive or result. The story must have some **point**; otherwise there is no reason for telling it. Thus, the point of "Moses and the Green Spectacles" (pp. 17–20) is the trick played on Moses by the sharper; that of Grey's Australian anecdote (pp. 27–29) is the native's superstitious horror of eating mussels. Omit the point in each case, and the story ceases to exist.

If you express in a sentence the **point** of any of the following poems, you will observe that your phrase or sentence might serve as a title for the poem or even as a summary of the story: —

"Paul Revere's Ride," by Longfellow;
"Nauhaught the Deacon," by Whittier;
"Lucy Gray," by Wordsworth;
"The Pied Piper of Hamelin," by Browning;
"The Inchcape Rock," by Southey;
"The Rising in '76," by T. B. Read;
"Brier Rose," by H. H. Boyesen;
"One, Two, Three," by H. C. Bunner;
"Horatius at the Bridge," by Macaulay.

NOTE. — The following list of poems will afford additional material: — Whittier's "Mabel Martin," "Abraham Davenport," "In School Days," "Angels of Buena Vista"; Longfellow's "Hiawatha" (selections) and "Tales of a Wayside Inn"; Tennyson's "Enoch Arden"; Browning's "Incident of the French Camp"; Cowper's "John Gilpin" and "Wreck of the Royal George"; Jean Ingelow's "High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire."

In a short story, then, the point is often expressed in the title, either in plain terms or by suggestion. Examples are Browning's "How they Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix," Tennyson's "Passing of Arthur," and Wordsworth's "We are Seven." So in a novel, the titles of the several chapters may serve the same purpose, since each chapter should be a unit and have a point of its own. In "A Tale of Two Cities," for instance, the last chapter of Book II is entitled "Drawn to the Loadstone Rock," and the concluding chapter of the work is called "The Footsteps Die Out Forever."

Sometimes the point of a story is announced at the outset and the incidents serve merely to illustrate or enforce it. Thus the point of Franklin's account of his "First Day in Philadelphia" (p. 12) is his poverty and friendlessness as contrasted with his eminence in later life.

Commonly, however, the action of a story **leads up** to the point, which is not disclosed until the proper moment arrives, so that our interest is kept on the stretch by the **suspense** in which we are held. In such an arrangement, the incidents, while following the natural order of time, appeal more and more strongly to the reader as he goes on, until the interest **culminates**, or reaches its highest pitch. This moment of highest interest is called the **climax** of the story. In "Lochinvar" (p. 20), for example, the action moves with a rush to the climax, — the stealing away of the bride. In "The Ancient Mariner" the movement is much more deliberate, as befits the character of the tale; but it progresses steadily until the climax is reached, —the mariner's blessing the water snakes and his consequent release from the curse. Note also how "Rumpelstiltskin" (pp. 14–17) observes both the order of time and the principle of the climax.

An admirably told anecdote is the following, from Trelawny's "Recollections." The point is the intense mental concentration of which Shelley was capable.

I called on him [Shelley] one morning at ten; he was in his study, with a German folio open, resting on the broad marble mantelpiece over an old-fashioned fireplace, and with a dictionary in his hand. He always read standing if possible. He had promised over night to go with me, but now begged me to let him off. I then rode to Leghorn, eleven or twelve miles distant, and passed the day there. On returning at six in the evening to dine with Mrs. Shelley and the Williamses as I had engaged to do, I went into the poet's room and found him in exactly the position in which I had left him in the morning, but looking pale and exhausted.

"Well," I said, "have you found it?"

Shutting the book and going to the window, he replied, "No, I have lost it," with a deep sigh. "I have lost a day."

"Cheer up, my lad, and come to dinner."

Putting his long fingers through his masses of wild, tangled hair, he answered faintly: "You go. I have dined, — late eating does n't do for me."

"What is this?" I asked, as I was going out of the room, pointing to one of his bookshelves with a plate containing bread and cold meat on it.

"That?" coloring, "Why, that must be my dinner! It's very foolish; I thought I had eaten it."

The student will observe that Trelawny's anecdote might seem trivial if it did not concern a person whose mental qualities are of interest to the world. Yet, trivial or not, it would remain a model of compact, lively, and pointed narration.

Stories are constructed in almost every conceivable fashion, and one must not expect to devise or discover a complete and satisfactory formula for narration. If, for instance, the writer's purpose is merely to delineate character in action, then the character itself may be the point,

and we may look in vain for a marked climax. Then, too, there may be lulls in the action, or several incidents may be so nearly equal in interest or significance that a definite "ascending series" is impossible. In general, however, it is clear that our interest must be maintained and enhanced as the story proceeds; otherwise we shall soon be discouraged, and the first object of a writer — *to have readers* — will be defeated.

SELECTION OF MATERIAL

To bring out the point of a story, a writer must **select from his material**: in other words, he must meet the question, "What incidents shall I include?" Common sense and daily experience immediately suggest the answer.

No story can be an absolutely complete record of what happened. A full account of your thoughts and experiences for a single day would fill many pages. Yet when you consider the happenings of a day or a week or a year, you perceive that they group themselves round distinct **incidents** which have, for some reason, impressed themselves on your memory. If these are made clear, the imagination supplies many of the connecting links.

"Moses and the Green Spectacles" (pp. 17–20) covers an entire day. To tell all that happened in that time would make a large and very stupid book, which nobody could read. Goldsmith has accounted for the whole day by selecting a number of significant incidents and arranging them in a natural order.

Franklin's account of his "First Day in Philadelphia" (p. 12) is a plain, straightforward story; yet, simple as it is, it is told with great skill. Every fact counts for something. Franklin's stuffed pockets show how unpromising a figure he cut for one who was to be a successful man; his scanty supply of money indicates the humble beginning of his fortunes; the puffiness of the

rolls brings out the whole grotesque picture vividly. Not one of these points could be omitted without loss. Yet Franklin did actually leave out many other facts in order to make his story clear and vivid. He says nothing of the weather, nothing of the appearance of the streets and houses, or of mud or dust or distance, — nothing of a hundred things that may well have risen in his memory while he was writing. It is largely Franklin's skilful choice of material that makes his "Autobiography" so interesting. He knew what to put in and what to leave out; and he could tell a plain tale in a straightforward and forcible style.

Sir Walter Scott's "Battle of Bannockburn" (pp. 22–26) illustrates in another way this art of selecting material in order to bring out the main point. Scott is writing history, — that is, he is telling the story of an event which had far-reaching consequences. He includes a number of details, — the "gallant show" of the English army, the multitude of their flags, what Bruce said to his nephew, Randolph, — all trifling in themselves, but serving to make the scene real to us as we read. Not for a moment, however, does he distract our attention from the main point of his narrative, — the great battle that changed the fate of Scotland. For the details are not taken at random; they are selected with the nicest care from many circumstances that might have been mentioned. Scott, then, had mastered this great principle of narration: he knew how to **select his material.**

These three examples show how much skill is required, even in the case of a simple story, to decide what to leave out and what to put in. In short, **selection of material is essential to the art of narration.**

Every story must have its own selection of material. Those very details of weather, mud, dust, and so on, which Franklin — for good reasons — refrained from mentioning in his "First Day in Philadelphia," might — for reasons equally good — appear in another story, told for a different purpose or intended to produce a different effect.

Proportion and **emphasis** in narration depend in great measure on skilful selection of material. Take, for example,

such a story of adventure as Dana's "Two Years Before the Mast." This consists, in the main, of a series of incidents, — passing the iceberg (p. 91); the long, bitter storm off Cape Horn; the hard labor of packing the hides into the hold on the Californian coast, and so on. Whole stretches of the voyage are run together into a single paragraph; and then the account of what happened in an hour or two is spread out over several pages.

De Foe follows the same natural method in "Robinson Crusoe." One of his extracts from Crusoe's journal, for example, reads as follows: —

> From the 1st of October to the 24th. — All these days entirely spent in many several voyages to get all I could out of the ship, which I brought on shore, every tide of flood, upon rafts. Much rain also in these days, though with some intervals of fair weather; but, it seems, this was the rainy season.

A little farther on, De Foe gives several pages to the earthquake and its consequences, — events which took place almost instantaneously.

We should apply the same principles in our own composition. Suppose we are to write the story of a hunting trip. Everything that happened on the expedition was doubtless "good fun"; but shooting the rapids was more exciting than a long paddle in the teeth of the wind, and an account of how we stalked a deer can probably be made more interesting than a description of an all-day tramp through the woods. If, then, we select a few striking incidents, we can give a clearer impression of the whole trip than by boring our readers with an exhaustive journal. These incidents, however, have to be bound together in some way, in order to make the story continuous, and for this purpose we can use more summary accounts of how we passed our time in

the intervals between the main events. Some description of our life in camp, or of the country, or even of the weather, will also be available as binding material. Thus De Foe every now and then brings in a short account of Crusoe's mode of life, or a list of articles saved from the ship, or a description of the seasons in the island. Incidentally, such things help to make a story more vivid or, as we sometimes say, *more real.*

Several objects, then, are gained or furthered by skilful selection of material in narration, — **clearness, coherence, proportion,** and proper **emphasis upon the point** of the story.

THE INTRODUCTION IN NARRATION

When you have outlined your story, — that is, have selected and arranged the incidents, — and when you have the action clearly in mind, you have gone at least halfway. In actual composition, however, you are confronted with the question, "How shall the story begin?"

Many stories begin with a brief **introduction,** naming and describing the characters, telling where the scene is laid, or giving some other information which the reader needs.

In Franklin's "First Day in Philadelphia" (p. 12), the first paragraph explains the author's purpose in telling the story and describes his appearance and condition at the beginning of the day.

In "The Battle of Bannockburn" (p. 22), the first two paragraphs tell what we need to know about the forces on each side.

In Tennyson's "Gareth and Lynette," the introduction is a scene between Gareth and his mother, showing how he is fretting his soul away because she will not let him go to King Arthur's court. The condition on which she finally gives her consent determines the whole character of the story by bringing down Lynette's scorn upon him as a "kitchen knave."

The introduction in a story often furnishes the local or historical **setting.** "Ivanhoe" begins with two pages explaining the relations between "the descendants of the victor Normans and the vanquished Saxons," on which the plot of the novel is to turn. Then comes the famous description of Gurth and Wamba in the forest, which tells us how the people of those times dressed and looked and talked. The first chapter of Mrs. Gaskell's "Cranford" is entitled "Our Society." It gives a wonderfully vivid description — full of humor and action — of social life in the little old-fashioned village and of such of the leading characters as we need to know at the outset. The introduction[1] to "Gulliver's Travels" consists in a short passage of very concise and matter-of-fact autobiography. Its purpose is merely to start the reader on the story with a strong impression that Captain Lemuel Gulliver was a real person and that his adventures actually took place.

Sometimes the introduction serves a less tangible purpose, and is intended rather to fix the **mood** or **atmosphere** of the book. "The House of the Seven Gables" has an introduction of this character. Hawthorne tells the story of the Pyncheons and of their strange house in such a way as to make us feel that there is something uncanny about the old building, — some vague mystery which haunts it and the family to whom it belongs. He mentions also the legends that were whispered among the neighbors, — rumors of doubtful rights in the holders of the property and of a curse which was said to hang over them.

[1] That is, the introduction proper (in Chapter I of "A Voyage to Lilliput"). There is other preliminary matter (a pretended letter from the publisher and a letter from Gulliver to his cousin) which has the same end in view.

A story often begins, so to speak, in the middle. The first sentence may introduce us to the characters in action or in the midst of an exciting conversation. This method has the advantage of rousing the reader's interest at the outset. "Lochinvar" (p. 20), for example, begins with the hero's ride "out of the West," without explaining who Lochinvar and the bride are or describing the circumstances at all.

In such cases, explanatory matter, if it is needed, may come in later, when the opening scene has been concluded.

Thus, in Shakspere's "Julius Cæsar," the first scene shows us the Roman workmen making riotous holiday, and the magistrates rebuking them. It is not until the second scene that we learn the real subject of the drama, — the plot against Cæsar and its results. In "Macbeth," the first scene, which is very short, brings in the Weird Sisters, who are speaking of Macbeth. Who Macbeth is, and what has been going on in Scotland, we learn from scene 2. So in "Lochinvar" (p. 21), the fourth stanza explains (very briefly) all that we need to know of the previous history of Lochinvar and the bride. "Silas Marner" begins with a description of Silas at Raveloe, and then goes back fifteen years to tell of his life in the factory town and the events that brought him to Raveloe.

You will often be surprised to see how small a quantity of explanatory matter is really needed to make a story intelligible. The less explanation you have to bring in, the more interesting the story will probably be. Something may safely be trusted to the imagination, — more, indeed, than you would at first suppose. Notice how needless an introduction would be in "Rumpelstiltskin" (p. 14).

We should not infer, therefore, that there is "one best way" to begin a story. Sometimes an introduction is necessary; sometimes, though not strictly necessary, it is desirable for one reason or another; sometimes it is quite

superfluous, and the story would be better without it. There is no general rule. Everything depends upon the circumstances, on the length and character of the story, and on the effect which the author wishes to produce.

Four examples will make this clear. They are taken from a single collection of short stories by a skilful writer.[1] In the first case, we have a brief introduction describing the scene and then explaining the circumstances; in the second, a single explanatory sentence is followed by description; in the third and fourth, the story begins without any preliminary remarks, — in one instance with action, in the other with conversation.

1. On Christmas eve the Mayor's stately mansion presented a beautiful appearance. There were rows of different-colored wax candles burning in every window, and beyond them one could see the chandeliers of gold and crystal blazing with light. The fiddles were squeaking merrily, and lovely little forms flew past the windows in time to the music.

There were gorgeous carpets laid from the door to the street, and carriages were constantly arriving, and fresh guests tripping over them. They were all children. The Mayor was giving a Christmas masquerade to-night, to all the children in the city, the poor as well as the rich. The preparation for this ball had been making an immense sensation for the last three months. Placards had been up in the most conspicuous points in the city, and all the daily newspapers had at least a column devoted to it, headed with "The Mayor's Christmas Masquerade" in very large letters.

2. Dame Clementina was in her dairy, churning, and her little daughter Nan was out in the flower garden. The flower garden was a little plot back of the cottage, full of all the sweet old-fashioned herbs. There were sweet marjoram, sage, summer savory, lavender, and ever so many others. Up in one corner, there was a little green bed of dill.

Nan was a dainty, slim little maiden, with yellow, flossy hair in shorts curls all over her head. Her eyes were very sweet and

[1] "The Pot of Gold and Other Stories," by Mary E. Wilkins (Boston, Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Company).

round and blue, and she wore a quaint little snuff-colored gown. It had a short full waist, with low neck and puffed sleeves, and the skirt was straight and narrow and down to her little heels.

3. Patience Mather was saying the seven multiplication table, when she heard a heavy step in the entry.

"That is Squire Bean," whispered her friend, Martha Joy, who stood at her elbow.

Patience stopped short in horror. Her especial bugbear in mathematics was eight-times-seven. She was coming toward it fast — could she remember it, with old Squire Bean looking at her?

4. "Margery," said her mother, "take the pitcher now, and fetch me some fresh, cool water from the well, and I will cook the porridge for supper."

"Yes, mother," said Margery. Then she put on her little white dimity hood, and got the pitcher, which was charmingly shaped, from the cupboard shelf.

In revising a story after you have written it, you will often discover that the introduction contains certain details which the reader does not need to know at the outset, and which will inevitably suggest themselves to him as he proceeds. When this is the case, the introduction should be cut down. Perhaps you can even get rid of it altogether by working what is left into the body of the story. If, however, you decide that the preliminary matter is necessary for clearness, you should certainly let it stand, particularly if it is interesting in itself.

Whatever the purpose or value of the introduction, it should not be too long. Do not make the porch larger than the house.

THE CONCLUSION IN NARRATION

In writing a story, as we have seen, one must ordinarily have in mind a definite **climax**, to which the incidents should lead up.[1] Thus, in "Rumpelstiltskin" (p. 14), the

[1] See p. 37.

whole tale leads up to the utterance of the uncanny creature's name. In Browning's "Incident of the French Camp," the climax is the boy's cry, "Nay, I'm killed, sire!" In Kipling's "Jungle Book," the story of "Kaa's Hunting" reaches its climax in the rescue of Mowgli.

This suggests the answer to a question that often causes trouble: "How shall a story close?" The difficulty varies with the nature of the subject and the manner of treatment.

A very brief anecdote usually ends with the **point** for the sake of which it is told; for, when this has been clearly brought out, there is nothing to be added. Trelawny's anecdote of Shelley (p. 38) closes in this manner. If, on the other hand, after the point has been reached, we find it necessary to add a lengthy explanation, we may be sure that we have not told our tale skilfully. In that case, we have to consider not how to conclude, but how to reconstruct the whole story so that it shall end naturally when the proper moment arrives.

Even in a short story, however, the **climax**, though it marks the height of the interest, may not make a natural conclusion. Thus, in "Rumpelstiltskin" (p. 14), the climax is the queen's utterance of the goblin's name; but to close with this would leave the reader unsatisfied, — he would be sure to ask what the *result* was, — "What happened then?" Accordingly, there is a brief additional paragraph which brings the whole adventure to a satisfactory end.

A more elaborate conclusion is that of Irving's "Rip Van Winkle." Here the climax is reached when the old woman recognizes Rip: — "Sure enough! it is Rip Van Winkle, — it is himself! Welcome home again, old neighbor! Why, where have you been these twenty long years?" But it takes a couple of pages to finish the story. Similarly, "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" does not end

when the goblin rider hurls his head at Ichabod Crane. Two or three additional pages are needed to suggest an explanation of the affair and to dismiss the characters properly. A conclusion of this kind is sometimes called the **resolution,** — that is, the "solution" or "clearing-up."

Whether a story shall end with the climax or not, depends altogether on circumstances and on the author's intention.[1] Now and then a tale is constructed for the express purpose of piquing our curiosity and leaving it unsatisfied. A familiar example is Mr. Frank Stockton's story of "The Lady or the Tiger?" In such cases every reader is at liberty to make a conclusion for himself — if he can. Usually, however, except in the briefest anecdotes, there is something to be said after the climax has been reached. The upshot of the matter may need to be told, or certain characters may have to be disposed of. An author should not leave his work at loose ends.

In a narrative meant to convey information, to explain something, or to prove a statement or principle, a more formal conclusion may be necessary.[2] This may consist of a paragraph or two setting forth the object or result of the whole, or reciting the proposition that has been proved. Such a paragraph forms either an **explanatory** or a **logical conclusion.** Thus Scott, at the end of his account of the Battle of Bannockburn (p. 26), devotes two short paragraphs to showing the results of the battle on the history of Scotland and England.

Above all things, one should avoid the practice of closing with a flowery sentence, a commonplace moral, a feeble bit of sentiment, or a hackneyed formula like "We reached home, tired but well satisfied" or "just in time

[1] Compare what has been said of the **introduction** (p. 45).

[2] Such narratives are closely related to exposition and argument.

for a hearty dinner." The conclusion ought to seem natural and inevitable. Otherwise it is usually better to stop when you get through, even at the risk of a little abruptness. In a letter, however, an abrupt ending may suggest discourtesy and thus give a false impression of the writer.

In a novel or long story, the conclusion usually requires at least a whole chapter. There are more characters to be dismissed than in a short story, and more complications to be cleared up. Besides, since the reader has come to regard the chief personages as old friends, he wishes to learn something of their future life and fortunes.

THE POINT OF VIEW

Before beginning a story, a writer must decide from whose **point of view** it is to be told. He has his choice among several methods.

(1) The story may be told **in the first person,** as if the hero were relating his own experiences.

"Robinson Crusoe," "Gulliver's Travels," and Stevenson's "Treasure Island" are told in the first person. This gives them the air of belonging to the large class of true stories of travel, adventure, and discovery. The appearance of egotism, which is one of the risks of using the first person, is often avoided by making the supposed narrator play only a subordinate part in the tale, like Mr. Mackellar's in "The Master of Ballantrae" or Dr. Watson's in "Sherlock Holmes." Sometimes he is a mere looker-on, who knows the characters and reports what they have told him of their adventures. This is a favorite device with Mr. Kipling.

(2) The story may be told by the hero **in the third person,** as if, though writing an autobiography, he did not like to use the pronoun *I.* Thackeray's "Henry Esmond" is a famous example.

The full title is: "The History of Henry Esmond, Esq., a Colonel in the Service of Her Majesty Queen Anne. Written by Himself." Esmond speaks of himself in the third person, except in the titles of the chapters. Now and then, however, he drops the mask — as would be natural — and says "I," and the concluding pages are written in the first person throughout.

(3) The story may be told, **in the third person,** by the author himself, from his own point of view, as if he were an historian. In this case he commonly assumes that he knows everything about his characters, and does not hesitate to record what they thought and how they felt, as well as what they said and did. Hence this method is sometimes called "telling a story from the **omniscient** point of view."

"A Tale of Two Cities," like Dickens's other novels, is written in the third person from the omniscient point of view. It describes the thoughts and feelings of all the actors in a way that would be impossible for a mere looker-on, or even for any single one of the actors themselves. George Eliot's "Silas Marner" is a still more striking example of this method; for much of its interest comes from the subtlety with which the author discusses and analyzes motives and traits of character.

(4) The story may be told **in the third person,** from the point of view of an imaginary narrator who has no share in the action.

Thus, in the "Canterbury Tales," Chaucer represents the several pilgrims (the Knight, the Squire, the Doctor, and so on) as telling, in the third person, stories which they have heard but in which they play no part. Longfellow uses the same device in his "Tales of a Wayside Inn," and Whittier in "The Tent on the Beach."

Of the four methods just described, only the first and the third are likely to be used by young writers. Each of these two methods has its advantages and its drawbacks. If you put yourself in the place of one of the

characters in your story, and tell it in the first person, your imagination is stimulated. The incidents become more real to you, and you are therefore more likely to select them wisely, to keep track of them, and to make them lead up directly and forcibly to the point that you wish to bring out. You have also a keener sense of time and place and circumstance, so that you unconsciously add many touches of action and description which lend life and color to the whole. Historians recognize all these advantages when they insert extracts from letters, orations, and other documents written by the actors themselves. So, in stories told in the third person, much conversation is introduced, in order that the characters may speak for themselves.

On the other hand, no one character in any but the simplest story can have personal knowledge of everything that occurred. He must learn some of the facts from the other actors. Stories told in the first person, therefore, require careful management in this particular. If the "I" of your story knows about anything that happened in his absence, you must show how he got his information. You must not let him appear to be a supernatural creature, able to be in two places at the same time.

NOTE. — Novelists occasionally get over this difficulty by making each of several characters tell that part of the story which he might naturally know. So, for instance, Wilkie Collins in "The Moonstone," and Stevenson (to some extent) in "The Master of Ballantrae."

It should be remembered that the adoption of a particular point of view is wholly a matter of convenience and expediency. If you can make a story more vivid and interesting by writing in the first person, then use that device. If, on the other hand, the story is such that no one character could naturally have known about all the

events which it narrates, then it would be absurd to twist and injure the plot merely in order to write in the first person. In such a case, the third person is manifestly better suited to the purpose.

Finally, **when you have once decided on a point of view, you should stick to it.** Vacillation or unsteadiness in this respect is a very serious fault. On the other hand, a writer who selects his point of view wisely, and maintains it with firmness and precision, adds much to the power of his story. "The Ancient Mariner" is a striking example of this truth.

SETTING OR BACKGROUND

We have seen that the introduction of a story is often used to make clear the **setting** or **background** of the incidents.[1] This setting or background includes far more than a mere statement of place and time. In many stories it is of great importance, especially in tales or novels which attempt to reproduce the life of a bygone age. Events and persons always become more real to us if we feel familiar with the surroundings or, as we say, the environment. For this reason, almost all stories of any length must include a certain amount of **description.** The general principles of description will be discussed in the next chapter; meanwhile, the following suggestions will be of use.

Descriptions in narration should be brief. Some stories, especially short anecdotes, get along very well with no description to speak of; and we all know from experience how often long descriptions in a story are skipped.

The description should include **movements and sounds,** as well as objects of sight. Note how much is contained

[1] See p. 43.

in the following stanza from Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner": —

> It ceased; yet still the sails made on
> A pleasant noise till noon, —
> A noise like of a hidden brook
> In the leafy month of June,
> That to the sleeping woods all night
> Singeth a quiet tune.

Kipling describes a bulldog following a carriage as "rolling in his run, and smiling as a bulldog will"; and Goldsmith, describing a scene at night, writes of a dog's "bark at hollow distance." Hints or suggestions of this kind, conveyed in a well-chosen word or phrase, are often far more effective than more elaborate descriptive passages. Observe the expressiveness of the italicized words in the passages that follow: —

By a sudden *blaze* which *sprang up* from a *fall* of unstirred coals, I saw that her eyes were full of tears. — Mrs. Gaskell.

He was in deep thought, and the birds seemed to know it, *trotting* quite near him on the sand, or *wheeling* and *calling* in his ears. — Stevenson.

The two gentlemen passed in that way, treading as lightly as they could, and so going through the passage into the court, over which the dawn was now reddening, and where the *fountain plashed* in the silence. — Thackeray.

I saw Shaw and Henry descending the hollow on the right at a leisurely gallop; and in front the buffalo were just disappearing behind the crest of the next hill, their short tails erect, and their *hoofs twinkling* through a cloud of dust. — Parkman.

The description in a story should, so far as possible, be **combined with the action,** just as, in real life, we note the appearance of persons and objects while we are doing something ourselves. A good example is the following passage from Borrow. The author represents himself as

having alighted from a stagecoach, shortly before dawn, in an unfamiliar village.

After standing still a minute or two, considering what I should do, I moved down what appeared to be the street of a small straggling town; presently I passed by a church, which rose indistinctly on my right hand; anon there was the rustling of foliage and the rushing of waters. I reached a bridge, beneath which a small stream was running in the direction of the south. I stopped and leaned over the parapet, for I have always loved to look upon streams, especially at the still hours. "What stream is this, I wonder?" said I, as I looked down from the parapet into the water, which whirled and gurgled below.

Here the movement of the story is not interrupted. What description is necessary is mingled so naturally and effectively with the action that the two can hardly be distinguished.

In some stories, especially those of out-of-door life, our chief interest may be in places and animals and weather. In this case, the space given to description will naturally be larger. Such stories, however, may easily become descriptions unless the action clearly preponderates. In such a book as Stevenson's "Travels with a Donkey," which is an account of a camping trip that the author made in the mountains of France, it is often hard to say whether a given chapter is narrative or descriptive; and the distinction is unimportant so long as the book holds our interest. The same is true of Thoreau's "Walden" and "Maine Woods."

In some stories the setting is of paramount importance, since it determines the **atmosphere** or tone of the whole book. This effect is especially striking in the case of Hawthorne, who is unsurpassed in the art of making an invisible and intangible influence dominate a whole story.

In "The House of the Seven Gables," for example, the crime of Colonel Pyncheon and the curse uttered by the wizard Maule on the scaffold hang over the house and the fortunes of its inmates. Hawthorne nowhere asserts the truth or the reality of this influence; but by constantly repeating the whispers and rumors of the superstitious neighbors he contrives to surround his story with an atmosphere of mystery. Hepzibah and Phœbe, Holgrave and Judge Pyncheon, are all figures of the everyday world of Salem in the middle of the nineteenth century. But the story, as Hawthorne says, is "a legend, prolonging itself, from an epoch now gray in the distance, down into our own broad daylight, and bringing along with it some of its legendary mist, which the reader, according to his pleasure, may either disregard, or allow to float almost imperceptibly about the characters and events for the sake of a picturesque effect." The strange charm of the book depends chiefly on this "legendary mist," that is, it comes rather from the setting than from the action.

So again, though in a different way, the setting of "A Tale of Two Cities" dominates the story. Here the action is far more important than in "The House of the Seven Gables," yet it is colored and intensified throughout by the horrors of the French Revolution. Dickens describes the oppression which drove the peasants and workpeople to desperation, and the uncontrollable storm of their fury when once they broke loose. This background of insane cruelty increases the suspense, and heightens by contrast the loveliness of Lucie, the idyllic peace of her life with her father and Darnay in England, and the nobility of Sydney Carton's sacrifice. Thus the setting comes almost to play a part in the working out of the plot.

In a novel or long story, indeed, whole incidents may be brought in for the express purpose of making the setting clear, or of keeping it before the reader's mind. Thus, in "Ivanhoe," Gurth's encounter with the outlaws (Chapter XI) is not necessary to the plot; but it gives us a far better understanding of the wild and turbulent times than we could get from a chapter of explanation.[1] Such

[1] Gurth's adventure also helps to bring out his character (see p. 57).

incidents are often called **episodes.**[1] They will be further discussed at a later stage of our study of narration (pp. 67–68).

CHARACTERIZATION IN STORIES

Besides providing for **action, plan,** and **setting,** a narrative writer must make the persons who take part in his story seem **real.** In other words, he must attend to **characterization.**

In very short or very simple stories, dealing chiefly with incident, characterization, like setting, almost takes care of itself; for so long as the actors say and do nothing "out of character" the reader takes their reality for granted. In longer stories, however, and in the drama, there is greater necessity as well as greater opportunity for the portrayal of character, so that in novels and plays the intricacies and seeming inconsistencies of character often become more interesting than the plot itself. One respect in which Shakspere surpassed his contemporaries was his understanding of human nature and his unrivalled skill in depicting it in all its varieties. "Hamlet" belongs, in plot and general outline, to the class known as "tragedies of revenge," which were not uncommon on the Elizabethan stage; but it stands far above all other dramas of this kind by virtue of the extraordinarily complicated character of Hamlet, which has given rise to more books than that of any other single personage in English literature.

The best and strongest mode of characterization is by means of the **action** and **conversation.** In real life we judge the character of the persons whom we meet chiefly by what they do and say. So in a good play, we know, from

[1] See the derivation and definition of this word in the dictionary.

seeing the actors perform their parts, just what kind of men and women they represent, and what judgment we should pass on them in real life. So, too, when Ivanhoe, though not yet recovered from his wounds, rushes to the relief of Rebecca, we feel the chivalry of his nature. When, in the same book, King Richard, disguised as the Black Knight of the Fetterlock, carouses with the Friar and exchanges buffets with him, we understand his reckless good temper; and again his treatment of de Bracy shows us his underlying royal dignity.[1] The more the persons in a story are defined by what they themselves say and do, the more sharply they stand out in the reader's mind.

We have seen that the incident of Gurth's encounter with the outlaws (in "Ivanhoe," Chapter XI) serves to bring out the **setting** of the novel.[2] At the same time it helps to define the character of Gurth himself. His fidelity and rude courage come out **directly** in his bold attempt to escape and his fight with the miller, and **indirectly** in the effect which his conduct and bearing produce upon the robbers, who not only release him and refuse to keep the money he is carrying, but even guide him to the top of a hill from which he can see his master's tent.

Sometimes the persons in a story or drama are made to characterize each other in the course of conversation. We learn almost as much about Jaques in "As You Like It" from what is said of him by the Duke and the lords as from what he says and does himself. In the drama, this is the only method available except that described in the two preceding paragraphs, since the dramatic writer cannot, like the novelist, come forward in his own person to describe or explain. It is also an especially valuable method when

[1] All these incidents also help to bring out the setting of the story (see p. 55), and some of them advance the plot as well. Thus their effect is much greater than if they served but a single purpose.

[2] See p. 55.

the story is told in the first person, since the conversation seems more real from being reported by one who is supposed to have heard it or taken part in it.

Characterization by **description** is also a useful method.[1] In real life we often form our opinions of a person from his looks; and, in a story, description affords us a similar basis for judgment. Such descriptions, however, should always be brief and pointed. Here is an example from "Silas Marner":—

> Mrs. Crackenthorpe — a small, blinking woman, who fidgeted incessantly with her lace, ribbons, and gold chain, turning her head about and making subdued noises, very much like a guinea-pig that twitches its nose and soliloquizes in all company indiscriminately — now blinked and fidgeted towards the Squire, and said, "Oh no — no offence!"

Characterization by **explanation** (or **exposition**)[2] is the least effective method. Long and elaborate expositions of character, such as abound in so-called "psychological novels," are apt to bore the reader and to be skipped. They are frequently only a cover for a writer's inability to imagine and set forth vividly what his characters would naturally do or say. At its best, as in George Eliot, this method adds greatly to our knowledge of the persons in a story, and to our interest in them. It is used chiefly in stories told from the "omniscient" point of view (p. 50).

All characterization, by whatever method, must be **consistent** both with the facts of human experience and with itself. The hero of a novel must not be an impossible bundle of all the virtues, nor the villain a mass of unrelieved wickedness; and a person who shows one characteristic at the outset must not show an inconsistent one

[1] See also p. 118. [2] See also pp. 188–191.

farther along, unless something has happened in the meantime to account for the change. In general, however, if a person in a story is clearly conceived and vividly portrayed, this point will take care of itself, since human nature is more freakish and inconsistent than fiction.

CONVERSATION IN NARRATION

In real life a word or a speech may be quite as important as an act. **Dialogue** or **conversation,** therefore, is an important element in a story. After Moses has come home from the fair (p. 19), what he *says* advances the story even more than what he *does*. So in "Rumpelstiltskin" (p. 16), the threats and commands of the goblin are necessary parts of the tale.

Dialogue adds variety to a story, and thus stimulates the reader's interest. It makes the action seem real by reproducing the very words of the actors, and it may, as we have seen, also often throw light on their **character** or **circumstances.** In the extract on pages 17–20, the vicar speaks far more calmly than his wife and uses better language. The wife's hasty temper, goodness of heart, and inexperience are shown in every speech she utters. Again, the boyish self-conceit of Moses comes out unmistakably in his first remarks after his return. Thus the use of conversation may enable a writer to spare a good deal of descriptive or explanatory matter that might otherwise be needed. In "Silas Marner" the conversation between Godfrey and Dunstan in Chapter III explains the false situation in which Godfrey stands on account of his secret marriage; and at the same time shows how weak he is, and how helpless in the hands of his unscrupulous brother.

In many stories, the actors, or some of them, talk in a local dialect and perhaps use bad grammar.[1] Such conversation shows immediately where the story is placed, and to what condition of life the speakers belong. Dialect, however, has no virtue in itself; and, if used without restraint, it soon becomes very tiresome. A mere suggestion of peculiarities in speech is often better than a laborious attempt at complete reproduction.

George Eliot employs conversation with great skill, especially that of country people. The scenes at the Rainbow Inn in "Silas Marner" are not merely full of quiet humor; they also contribute largely to the setting and the atmosphere of the novel by revealing the dense and narrow ignorance of rural England a hundred years ago, which alone made possible the events of the story. There is dialect enough to heighten the local color, and not so much as to disturb the reader. A good example may be seen in Chapter VI. Scott's use of the Scottish dialect is beyond all praise. See, for instance, the talk of Caleb Balderstone in "The Bride of Lammermoor."

At the other extreme from dialect stands such conversation as that in "Henry Esmond" (Book III, Chapter IV) where Lady Castlewood tells the Duke of Hamilton that Henry is the real Lord Castlewood, and has renounced his title out of love for his benefactor's family. In this, one of the greatest scenes in all fiction, the tone of the dialogue is so dignified and stately that one feels instinctively the high rank and breeding of the speakers. The art of thus suiting the style of the conversation to the characters and the situation, and at the same time to the general tone of the story, whether grave or gay, is one of the greatest gifts of the great novelists.

NOTE. — Conversation in books can never be an exact copy of that which we hear in real life. Selection and condensation are always necessary, and

[1] For the distinction between dialect and slang, see pp. 353–354.

typical or striking remarks must therefore occur oftener than in everyday talk. It follows that, if the characters and incidents in a story are out of the common, and if the general action moves on a high plane of thought or emotion, the style of the conversation may be elevated above that which the speakers would actually have used. Such elevation is not to be regarded as unnatural. It is akin to the imaginative intensity of poetical diction (see p. 31). A good example may be seen in the speech of Meg Merrilies to Ellangowan in Scott's "Guy Mannering" (Chapter VIII), on which Anthony Trollope remarks, with perfect justice: "That does not offend, impossible though it be that any old woman should have spoken such words."

When a story is told in the first person, it often happens that a part of the action takes place at a distance from the main scene, or, at all events, not under the eyes of the supposed narrator. In such cases, this part of the action may be reported in a conversation in which the narrator takes part or which he overhears. In "The Vicar of Wakefield," for instance, what happened at the fair is related in the conversation that follows the return of Moses (pp. 19–20).

A similar device may be employed in stories told in the third person.

Thus, in "Rumpelstiltskin" (p. 16), the messenger clears up the whole mystery by the report which he makes to the queen. He has seen a ridiculous little man hopping about a fire and singing a song that reveals the wished-for name. Again, in "Silas Marner" (Chapter III), the conversation between Godfrey and Dunstan is used to inform the reader of Godfrey's entanglement.

In all three of these stories, then, the action is advanced in a direct and orderly way by means of conversation.

In the **drama**, which is all action and speech, the dialogue must furnish us with much information that, in a story, we get from narrative, descriptive, and explanatory passages.[1]

[1] See also p. 57.

In "As You Like It," for instance, the conversation in the first scene explains the circumstances which later force Orlando to leave home and go to the Forest of Arden. That in the second scene, besides showing how Orlando first touched Rosalind's fancy, tells of the banishment of the rightful Duke. Thus the dialogue gradually reveals to the audience all that it is necessary for them to know of the circumstances.

Again, in "The Merchant of Venice," the opening lines of Act v describe a moonlight night in beautifully poetic language. When the play was first acted, this speech was the only possible means of informing the audience that the moon was shining; for the theatres of Shakspere's time had practically no scenery or stage-setting. By means of the dialogue, therefore, Shakspere created, at the beginning of this act, the atmosphere of romantic beauty which makes it so fitting an end to the play. Similarly, in "Macbeth," Act i, Scene 6, Duncan and Banquo describe Macbeth's castle in a short dialogue which brings the whole situation vividly before the minds of the spectators.

The conversation in a story can repeat but a small part of what would actually have been said in real life. One can read all the dialogue on pages 19–20 in two or three minutes; but of course the actual scene would have lasted much longer. Goldsmith put in only enough to tell what happened and to suggest the feelings and characters of the actors. In the dialogue, then, as well as in the incidents, a story-teller must **select his material** (p. 39), including only what is interesting, characteristic, and to the point. In narration, as in life, too much talk is tiresome. The conversation in a story should never clog or enfeeble the action.

In writing a conversation, therefore, select such speeches as will help to advance the action, to bring out the character or situation of the speakers, and to make the narrative lively, and leave the rest to the reader's imagination.

MATERIAL FOR STORIES

No life is so flat and dull as not to afford **material for good stories.** Literature abounds in illustrations of this truth. Goldsmith's "Vicar of Wakefield" shows what a writer of genius may accomplish with the simplest materials. Mrs. Gaskell's "Cranford" deals with quiet life in an old-fashioned neighborhood. Mr. Barrie's "Window in Thrums" is a collection of short stories about a sick woman, shut up in her room in an out-of-the-way village in Scotland. It hardly goes beyond what she can see from her window or what the neighbors say when they call. The short stories in the better magazines often deal with life in little country towns, with the daily work of newspaper reporters, with children's doings, or with the slums in great cities.

The newspaper reporter has few great events to chronicle. Yet, as he walks about the streets, he fills his notebook daily with items that people are eager to read. The materials for story-writing, then, are abundant. We must train ourselves to observe small happenings, to recognize their significance, and to report them so vividly that others will appreciate their interest.

Observe the details that Goldsmith thinks it worth while to notice and to put into his "Vicar of Wakefield" (p. 18). Mr. Burchell had bought the children each a pennyworth of gingerbread, which, says the vicar, "my wife undertook to keep for them and give them by little at a time." Again, the vicar's wife "was unusually fond of a weasel-skin purse, as being the most lucky."

Dickens's description of "The Old Boat" (pp. 92–94) illustrates in another way the effectiveness of trifles when handled by a great writer.

Even in "Lochinvar" (p. 20), which is so brief, and moves so rapidly, we find the line "And the bridegroom stood dangling

his bonnet and plume." Omit it, and note what is lost. "Rumpelstiltskin" (p. 15) would not be so good without the "whirr, whirr, whirr" of the spinning-wheel. In Grey's "Australian Superstition" (p. 28), the exact words of poor Kaiber's song about the mussels impart vividness and reality to the anecdote.

On the other hand, good writers never encumber their stories with useless matter. They may introduce a multitude of details, but every one serves a definite purpose.

In "The Vicar of Wakefield," for instance, Goldsmith wishes to make the reader feel the simplicity and unworldliness of the vicar and his family. This he accomplishes by the aid of many little touches, some of them apparently quite accidental, but all in reality significant. If Mr. Burchell had been the subject of the story, Goldsmith would have selected his details quite differently.

Again, in "Rumpelstiltskin" (pp. 16–17), the wrong names are mentioned with deliberate purpose, in order to increase the reader's suspense.

In Grey's "Australian Superstition" (pp. 27–28), the use of the native word for *wizard* marks the contrast between the ignorant savage and the enlightened explorer. Thus the point of the story comes out more clearly.

Writers who try to copy life exactly by means of a great number of minute and specific details are sometimes called "realists." This method is tiresome when carried to an extreme. But in a modified sense all great story-writers are realists: that is, they use minor details to make their stories seem more real. Swift, in "Gulliver's Travels," thinks it worth while to tell us the name of Gulliver's wife, though that has nothing to do with the Captain's adventures. De Foe makes Robinson Crusoe write, in describing his condition when he was washed ashore from the wreck, "I had nothing about me but a knife, a tobacco pipe, and a little tobacco in a box"; and later,

when he pitched his tent: "It was on the N.N.W. side of the hill, so that I was sheltered from the heat every day, till it came to a W. by S. sun, or thereabouts, which in those countries is near the setting." With such writers every detail serves its purpose, — to heighten the action, to make the setting more vivid, or to bring out the individuality of some character in clearer relief.

THE USES OF INCIDENT IN NARRATION

Action, as we have seen again and again, is the essential quality of a story. Without action there can be no such thing as **narration.** We have studied the several **uses** or **functions** of incident separately. If, now, we bring these uses together, we shall find that they group themselves under three heads: **plot, setting,** and **character.**

I. **Incident serves to advance the plot.** The word **plot,**[1] as applied to narrative and dramatic writing, denotes the scheme or system of connected incidents which, taken together, make up the story, or, in other words, the **ground plan** of the tale, novel, or play. To **advance the plot** is, then, the most obvious and important use of incident. One can outline the plot of "Ivanhoe," for example, in the form of a table; but such a table is not a story, any more than a skeleton is a living man. This point is so self-evident as to need no discussion.

Among incidents that advance the plot of Ivanhoe are: — the visit of the Prior and the Templar to Rotherwood; the assistance given by the Palmer to the Jew; the Tournament.

II. **Incident gives setting.** Setting, as we have seen, is largely dependent on description. In a long story, however,

[1] The term is usually restricted to works of some length. Thus we speak of the *plot* of a novel or a tragedy, but not of the plot of a brief anecdote.

there is opportunity for the use of a far livelier device, — the interweaving of **episodes** (pp. 55–56), which, though they do not advance the plot materially, if at all, bring out the setting by means of action.

Examples from "Ivanhoe" are Gurth's encounter with the outlaws (see p. 67, below); the archery contest (Chapter XIII); Cedric's attack on Gurth's dog Fangs (Chapter XVIII); the threatened torture of Isaac the Jew (Chapter XXII); the Prior's ransom (Chapter XXXIII). All of these might be omitted without affecting the main plot, but we cannot spare them. They are good stories in themselves and they form an integral part of the setting.

III. **Incident brings out character.** A person's character, as we know, is best judged by his actions. Incident, therefore, is the most powerful method of bringing out character in a story. Description and explanation may also be necessary, but they will fail of their object unless a writer makes the men and women whom he describes act in accordance with the character he has given them.

All the examples from "Ivanhoe" just cited under Setting apply equally well here. Gurth's rude valor comes out in his encounter with the outlaws; Cedric's impatience is shown by his anger at Fangs; Front-de-Bœuf's greed and cruelty and Isaac's tight grip on his money appear in the incident of the threatened torture; the episode of the Prior's ransom exhibits very varied traits in the several actors.

NOTE. — In stories which rely for their interest rather on delineation of character than on exciting action or absorbing plot, the importance of this use of incident becomes paramount. Such are Mrs. Gaskell's "Cranford" and the novels of Miss Austen and Miss Burney. In so-called "psychological novels," like some of George Eliot's, where character is subjected to subtle and long-continued analysis, the smallest incidents illustrate the traits and qualities which the author is studying. In such cases, it requires the nicest art to keep a proper proportion between the analysis and the incident, so that the events shall not seem to take place merely for the sake of being interpreted in terms of character.

Observe that the three uses or functions of incident are not mutually exclusive. An incident that advances the plot almost always helps the setting and brings out character as well. And, on the other hand, an **episode** — an incident that serves mainly for setting or characterization — may also advance the plot, either directly, or by introducing new actors, by showing the relations between persons, or the like.

Thus, the Tournament is one of the main incidents in the plot of "Ivanhoe"; at the same time it brings out the characters of all concerned and is very significant for the setting. On the other hand, Gurth's encounter with the outlaws, which serves primarily for setting and characterization, is of some moment in advancing the plot, since it not only introduces us to Locksley's band, but reveals their sentiments toward the Normans, and thus prepares us for the part they are to play in attacking Front-de-Bœuf's castle and releasing Rowena.

A good story-teller, then, makes each incident serve every purpose to which it is adapted; or rather, he selects such incidents as are naturally adaptable to more purposes than one. In other words, he practices "artistic economy."

A good novelist also manages his **episodes** skilfully. He keeps them subordinate, both in number and in length, to the main action, so that his story shall not become rambling or disconnected or confused or out of proportion. He also takes care that they arise naturally from the plot and are not, as the saying is, "lugged in by the head and shoulders."

Thus the encounter of Gurth with the outlaws, in "Ivanhoe" (Chapter XI), is precisely the kind of adventure that was likely to happen to him in his night journey from Ashby to the lists in those disorderly times. Moreover, we are prepared for something of the sort by the warning which Rebecca gives him at the close of the preceding chapter, and by his own anxiety as he enters the

dark and lonesome lane beyond the outskirts of the village. And finally, at the end of Chapter XII, our feeling that the encounter was natural and probable is confirmed by the reflections of Gurth's master, who is surprised, not that Gurth fell in with robbers, but that they let him go without taking the gold.

COMPLICATION OF PLOT

A simple story, as we have seen,[1] may follow the order of time throughout; but in a more complicated narrative this is seldom possible. For example, there may be two sets of characters acting in different places at the same time, and the point of the story may be the combined effect of their separate action.

Thus the story of the discovery of a gold mine might bring in (1) an exploring or prospecting party who are searching for gold, and (2) a band of hunters who have come from quite another direction and have no thought of treasure. The point of the story might be the simultaneous discovery of the mine by the two parties and their contest over the ownership.

This is a very simple example, but it illustrates the general principle of all **complications of plot.** The search of the prospectors and the wanderings of the hunting party **take place** at the same time, but they cannot **be told** at the same time: in the story, one must come before the other, or the two must be interwoven in some way. In either case, the writer must make clear the fact that both sets of actions really take place together, though in different localities.

In a **novel** or **romance** the complications may be very numerous; for a number of different stories may combine to make the plot of the book. In such cases, the author must keep the several sets of characters distinct, as well

[1] See p. 35.

as their action, until the moment when they naturally come together or cross each other's path.

Stevenson's "Treasure Island" is a good example of the complications of time and action that may arise in a not very elaborate plot. It also illustrates the art of a good story-teller in keeping the parts of a plot distinct so that there is no confusion in the reader's mind.

Part I describes the pirates and tells how the map of Treasure Island was found in Billy Bones's sea chest. Here everything moves in the actual order of time; for the narrator, Jim Hawkins, is the chief actor in all these events.

At the beginning of Part II, however, Squire Trelawney is in Bristol, purchasing a ship for the expedition and engaging his crew, — among them John Silver, who afterwards causes so much trouble. Jim is still at home. Hence Mr. Trelawney's doings are narrated in a letter to old Redruth, which is read aloud by Jim, because the recipient "was a poor hand at reading anything but print."

Then the story continues in Jim's own words. The conspiracy of the mutineers, however, is not inserted in its actual chronological position. It had been formed before the ship sailed, but our first knowledge of the plan comes from a conversation between Silver and the mutineers, which Jim overhears from his hiding-place in the apple barrel.

Later, when the island is reached and Jim has slipped ashore, there are the separate adventures (1) of Jim, (2) of Captain Smollett's party, and (3) of Silver's gang, — all of which are going on at the same time but in different places. These have to be kept distinct; yet their relations to each other must be made plain. Accordingly, Jim tells his own adventures; then three chapters are given to the Doctor's story of what happened to the Captain's party; and finally, when Jim resumes the narrative, Silver comes in with a flag of truce and we gather enough of what has happened to the mutineers to keep the story intelligible.

So the tale goes on, Jim's personal adventures coming more and more to the front, until, at the end, all that has happened to the others while Jim was in the coracle, on board the Hispaniola, and

in the mutineers' camp, is related to Jim, in a few words, as the party "proceeds leisurely downhill to where the boats are lying."

Compare Stevenson's "Treasure Island" with "Robinson Crusoe," and you will at once perceive that the former has the more complicated plot. In "Robinson Crusoe,"[1] long as it is, there is only a single story, — that of Crusoe's own experiences.

The tale begins at the beginning. Crusoe tells of his birth and parentage, how he first went to sea, then became a Guinea trader, was taken prisoner by the Moors, escaped and settled in Brazil, and finally embarked on the voyage which ended with his shipwreck. Since Crusoe is the only person concerned, all these events are told in the order in which they occurred. From this point, except for Friday's account of himself, the book is a straightforward record of Robinson's adventures. Hence DeFoe can still follow the order of time, and has no trouble in keeping the thread of the story from breaking or getting tangled.

In "A Tale of Two Cities" the treatment of each set of characters is fuller than in "Treasure Island," and the plot is far more complicated. It might be analyzed into a number of separate stories: the story of Charles Darnay and Lucie Manette, with the strange intermingling of their family histories, which is the main subject of the book; the story of the Defarges, of Dr. Manette in the Bastille, of Miss Pross and her blackguard brother ("Barsad"), of Sydney Carton, of Cruncher, "the honest tradesman." In constructing the plot Dickens brings these persons, who differ so widely in character and circumstances, into such situations that their several fortunes act and react upon each other, until Sydney Carton, who has wasted his life and his talents in dissipation, is brought under the ennobling influence of Lucie, and provides the solution by sacrificing himself to save her husband.

[1] Part I is of course meant.

A little study will show how much skill and foresight Dickens used in keeping these trains of incident distinct, and making them all lead up to the climax.

Book I. — Mr. Lorry, the elderly banker, journeys from London to Dover, where he meets Lucie and informs her that her father, Dr. Manette, is not dead, but that he has just been released from the Bastille, broken in mind and body, after eighteen years' imprisonment. (Miss Pross, Lucie's devoted attendant, makes her first appearance at this point. She is to play a most important part at the climax of the story.) Mr. Lorry and Lucie go to Paris, find the Doctor at the house of Defarge, his old servant, and start with him for England. (Incidentally, Book I describes the ferocious misery of the French people, which is soon to result in the Revolution.)

Book II (*five years later*). — Darnay's trial at the Old Bailey, on a false charge of treasonable correspondence with France, brings him and Lucie together. It also introduces Sydney Carton, the dissipated lawyer, and emphasizes his strange resemblance to Darnay, on which the final unravelling of the plot is to depend. Two spies, Barsad and Cly, give false evidence against Darnay at the trial. — *The scene shifts to France.*[1] The brutal behavior of the Marquis d'Evrémonde when his coach runs over a child in the streets of Paris shows the tyranny of the nobles, which is to precipitate the French Revolution. The marquis, at his château in the country, has an interview with Darnay, who, as we now learn, is his nephew and heir. Darnay renounces his inheritance and declares his intention of living in England. That night the marquis is murdered by the father of the child. — *The scene shifts to London. A year passes.* Darnay tells Dr. Manette of his love for Lucie. Carton's hopeless love for her is also revealed. Cly's funeral and the body-snatching adventure of Cruncher come in here. (The connection of these two incidents with the plot is made evident in Book III.) — *The scene shifts to Paris.* The tide of

[1] These sudden changes of scene would not be allowable in a short story. They are, indeed, exceptional in a novel, and that Dickens succeeds in making them seem natural is a proof of his great narrative skill. The division of the story between London and Paris is so marked a feature of this novel that it actually determines its title, — "A Tale of Two Cities."

the Revolution is rising; the people are preparing for an outbreak. — *The scene shifts to London.* Lucie and Darnay are married. — *The scene shifts to Paris.* The populace revolt and storm the Bastille; the château of the Evrémondes is burned down. — *The scene shifts to London.* Darnay, learning that the agent of the Evrémondes has been arrested by the revolutionists, sets out for Paris to save him.

Book III. — *The scene shifts to Paris.* Darnay is arrested by the revolutionists as an "aristocrat" and "emigrant," and is thrown into prison at a time when the prisoners are daily massacred by the mob. The Reign of Terror is in full career. Dr. Manette goes to Paris, with Lucie and her child. He is honored by the revolutionists as a former victim of tyranny, and protects Darnay, though he cannot secure his release. —*A year and three months pass.* Darnay is acquitted, through the Doctor's efforts, but is almost immediately rearrested through the instrumentality of the Defarges. At his second trial Defarge produces a document, written by the Doctor years before in the Bastille, recounting the crimes of the Evrémondes (Darnay's father and uncle). This causes Darnay's condemnation, despite the Doctor's protests. The reason for the malignity of the Defarges is explained. The spies Barsad and Cly (who is not really dead) appear in Paris in the service of the revolutionists. (The significance of Cruncher's adventure in Book II is now made clear.) Carton, who has come to France to assist Lucie, recognizes the spies. He terrifies Barsad into helping him in a plan to save Darnay. Relying on his extraordinary resemblance to Darnay, Carton changes places with him in prison, and Darnay is carried out of Paris, unconscious, in a coach with Lucie, the child, the Doctor, and Mr. Lorry. Madame Defarge learns that Lucie and the child have escaped, but, before she can have them pursued, she is killed in a struggle with Miss Pross. Carton goes to his death, rejoicing in having saved Lucie's husband. What we need to know of the future of Lucie and Darnay is briefly told as a kind of vision which Carton might have had at the foot of the scaffold.

In spite of this intricate complication of plot, "A Tale of Two Cities" is perfectly clear. We pass from scene to scene, and from one set of characters to another, without

an effort; and our interest is constantly increased by the **suspense,** until the climax is reached with the escape of Darnay and the death of Carton.

THE NARRATIVE IN LITERATURE

If we turn to literature, and consider the stories that have been woven out of the tangled threads of human experience, we find almost as many varieties as there are kinds of readers. The diversity is so great, and the differences melt into each other so indistinguishably, that no thorough-going classification is possible. We may begin, however, with the familiar division into "true stories" and fiction.

Among true stories we may classify histories, biographies, and other similar works that we have decided to call **narratives** (pp. 29–31). With them would go books of travel and exploration, like Stanley's "In Darkest Africa," Nansen's "Farthest North," Grey's "Travels in Australia," and Dana's "Two Years Before the Mast," and autobiographies, such as Lord Roberts's "Forty-one Years in India." Such narratives are often as entertaining as any novel. Besides, they record facts of permanent importance, for their material is the actual experience of real men and women.

The great class of **fiction** includes not only made-up stories, but also many poems and plays. Indeed, it comprises the greater part of what we commonly call **literature.** In such works, the material, instead of being the actual experience of a limited number of real persons, may be drawn from the collective experience of many ages and nations, or it may pass beyond experience into the realm of the purely imaginative. This class of literature is of

boundless extent. It includes, on the one hand, works like "Robinson Crusoe" and "David Copperfield," which seem almost truer than reality, and, on the other, fairy stories, dramas like "A Midsummer Night's Dream," and, in our own day, tales like those in Kipling's "Jungle Books," — all of them the product of the poetical imagination. In fiction, then, the material of experience has been, as it were, dissolved and recrystallized into new creations, of which some bear the semblance of reality, while others are unreal and even fantastic.

The mere fact that a story is a work of fiction, however, does not prevent its having a deep and significant truth of its own. Great pieces of literature, such as the novels of Hawthorne or Dickens or Thackeray, or the plays of Shakspere, are true to nature in a sense that is not merely figurative; for they exhibit life and character in distinct and intelligible outlines. A simple fairy tale like "The Ugly Duckling" may bring into clear light the pathos of some life that seemed lost in the multitude of everyday details.

That fiction has a truth of its own we may easily see by considering how it is used in fables and allegories to convey a lesson. A fable, which is a very short story, usually of beasts or inanimate objects, throws into strong relief some characteristic or foible of human nature. "The Fox and the Grapes" and "The Lion's Share" are fables that have passed into proverbs. An allegory [1] is a more artificial and elaborate parable, in which the actors are sometimes personified qualities, like Courage or Temperance or Craftiness. Both allegory and fable show how effectively fiction may convey deep and universal truths.

[1] See also pp. 378–380.

We find, then, that the distinction between "true stories" and works of pure imagination, though convenient, is not quite essential. For fiction may be just as *true*, in the higher sense of the word, as history or travel or any other record of actual experience. Let us therefore make another classification of stories, dividing them into (1) those that have their main interest in **adventure**, and (2) those in which the emphasis is laid rather on **character** or **manners**.

The first class needs no discussion. "Robinson Crusoe" has been read for two hundred years, and is quite as popular now as it was in De Foe's lifetime. Indeed, tales of **adventure** were never in greater favor than they are to-day. Stevenson's "Treasure Island" and "Kidnapped" and Kipling's stories are familiar to every one. Such tales give us pleasure because through them we share in new and stirring experiences which most of us can never have. They bring the whole world to our firesides. As we read them, we feel the enchantment of strange lands and distant seas.

In stories of the second class, — and especially in novels, — the interest lies not so much in what the actors *do* as in what they *are*. The purpose is not primarily to describe adventures, but rather to **portray character**.

Into this class fall such works as George Eliot's novels, with most of those of Dickens, of Thackeray, and (among American writers) of Hawthorne. There may be incident in plenty (as in "A Tale of Two Cities"), yet the chief purpose is to bring the actors into situations that will throw their characters into relief.

Compare a story of pure adventure, like "Robinson Crusoe" or "Treasure Island," with "A Tale of Two Cities," and you feel the difference at once. In the latter,

there are as many exciting events, as many hairbreadth escapes, as in either of the former. Yet you instinctively feel that these are not told merely for their own sake. There is a great deal else in the story. You remember the sweetness of Lucie; the uprightness of Dr. Manette; the quiet, fierce heat of Madame Defarge's vengeance; the nobility concealed under the reckless bearing of Sydney Carton. All these persons, with many others, are brought so vividly before you in "A Tale of Two Cities" that you forget that they are creatures of the imagination. Indeed, the characters in novels are often far more real to us than the personages of history.

Frequently, too, the main interest of a work of fiction resides in the state of society or of **manners** that it portrays. Such is the case in Jane Austen's novels, and in Mrs. Gaskell's "Cranford." In our own day, the life of New England has been described in the stories of Miss Jewett and Miss Wilkins; that of the Middle West by Octave Thanet. Though the life that they portray is commonplace enough, it is so vividly and naturally depicted that nobody finds it dull, especially when it is enlivened by humor, one of the most delightful of human qualities.

The reason why studies of character and manners are so widely read is that human nature is always interesting. A good novelist picks out a few typical persons, and detaches their experiences from those of the mass of people that surround them. Thus we get a vivid impression of their human qualities, and our interest is roused and sustained. The purpose of a novelist is akin to that of the author or editor of a "Life and Letters," as contrasted with that of a biographical article in an encyclopædia. Such an article must be confined to a bare record of facts; while a work like Lockhart's "Life and Letters

of Sir Walter Scott," or Trevelyan's "Life and Letters of Macaulay," aims to portray the life of its subject in every detail, and to show the times in which he lived, the friends he made, and all his views on the men and events of his day.

An intelligent reading of the best novels is not a waste of time; for to understand human nature is no small part of wisdom. But we must distinguish between what is really good, and what is merely entertaining for the moment. A good novel preserves, in memorable form, some record of human nature which is true to life. The general run of trashy stories do little more than put a set of wooden puppets through a series of mechanical and meaningless antics.

The greatest figure in English literature, if not in all literature, is Shakspere. He owes his preëminence not only to the beauty and splendor of his poetry, but, even more, to his unfailing insight into human nature in all its variety and all its depths, and to his ability to portray it adequately in speech and action. Most of his dramatic material was common to the playwrights of his day. Tragedies of revenge were familiar to the London playgoer at the end of the sixteenth century. All of them are forgotten, except by scholars; yet "Hamlet" survives because Shakspere inspired the persons of the drama with such life that we cannot bring ourselves to regard them as fictitious. Men still discuss the character of Hamlet as seriously as they discuss the character of Napoleon. We can ask no better proof that literature, as much as science, embodies truth.

EXERCISES IN NARRATION

Outlines

The **plan** or **outline** of a story may be drawn up in the form of a table. Such outlines are useful in studying narration; for, in making them, one is forced to notice the order and connection of the incidents, the nature and position of the climax (p. 37), and, in short, the whole structure of the story. They are also practically serviceable in preparing for recitation. The following outline of Mr. Kipling's "Rikki-tikki-tavi" will serve as an example: —

1. Introduction. (Description of Rikki; setting; Rikki taken into the family.)
2. Darzee's woful tale.
3. Rikki encounters Nag and Nagaina.
4. Rikki kills the dust snake.
5. Rikki's interview with Chuchundra.
6. Rikki overhears Nag's plot.
7. Rikki kills Nag in the bathroom.
8. Rikki destroys all Nagaina's eggs but one.
9. Rikki tricks Nagaina and saves Teddy.
10. Battle with Nagaina. (Climax.)
11. Conclusion.

Oral Exercises in Story-Telling

In each of the following exercises, —

I. Think out your story.
II. Prepare an outline of your story.
III. Tell the story, using the outline to guide you.

1. Recount some anecdote of your childhood.
2. Tell the story of "Horatius at the Bridge."
3. Recite some anecdote of your school experience.
4. Give an account of a picnic in which you have taken part.
5. Outline briefly one of the stories told in Longfellow's "Tales of a Wayside Inn"; in Irving's "Tales of a Traveller."
6. Tell in your own words one of Æsop's fables.

7. Imagine that you are asked to carry a message. Give an account (1) of the conversation between yourself and the sender of the message; (2) of your endeavor to fulfil the commission; (3) of the conversation between yourself and the person to whom the message is sent. Recite the story as if you were telling it to a third person. Recite it as if you were telling the story to the person who sent the message.

8. Prepare to tell to the class some interesting anecdote that you have read.

9. Repeat a story that you have read in one of the recent magazines.

10. Two boys are quarrelling. Their father separates them and demands an explanation. Explain to the father, as one of the boys might have done, the circumstances leading to the quarrel.

11. A student comes to the class unprepared. After the recitation the teacher asks him to explain his failure. Recount the train of circumstances which prevented the preparation of the lesson.

12. Find in your History some account of an important event. Make an outline of the order of occurrences, and recite to the class from the outline.

13. Select an incident from some novel (as "David Copperfield," for example). Repeat the incident in your own words, taking care to explain the circumstances so that your story may be understood by the hearer.

14. Prepare the story of an accident which might occur with a bicycle, an automobile, a pump, or some other machine.

In order to make the accident plain, explain the working of the machine when it is in order, naming the parts.

Action (p. 32)

1. Bring to the class some piece of narration. Point out the means by which the writer has indicated action on the part of his characters.

2. Read Browning's "Incident of the French Camp." Then tell the story as briefly and vividly as you can. Compare the movement of your story with that of the poem.

3. Read "The Charge of the Light Brigade." How does it illustrate action in narration?

4. Outline a story of something that you have done, putting in nothing but action.

5. Read Scott's "Lochinvar" (pp. 20–21). Make a list of the words that express or suggest action in any way.

6. Embody in a letter an account of a day in the mountains, telling what you did. Aim to make the account effective by employing words which express action.

7. Get a copy of Southey's "How the Waters Come Down at Lodore." Study the means used to express action. (Sidney Lanier's "Song of the Chattahoochee" may be studied in the same way. "Hohenlinden," "Marco Bozzaris," and "The Rising in '76" would also be effective in such study.)

8. Write two brief telegrams in which you express, in condensed form, all the action possible. Expand each telegram into a letter, preserving the effect of action so far as you can.

9. Write a letter to a friend, telling what you have done during the past week. Rewrite the letter, giving particular attention to action.

10. Tell a story from Greek or Scandinavian mythology. (See Bulfinch's "Age of Fable" or Gayley's "Classic Myths.") Attend particularly to action.

Introduction (p. 42)

1. Select from some story with which you are familiar a brief bit of narrative or conversation. Preface the extract with such introductory matter as seems to you suitable. Make the introduction as clear and concise as possible.

2. Study some narrative poem with which you are familiar, and describe in writing the poet's introduction to the story.

3. Tell one of Æsop's fables in your own words. If the story is formally introduced, describe the introduction. If the writer has omitted the introduction, give reasons for the omission.

4. Select a striking incident from some magazine article. Copy it to present to the class, writing a suitable introduction. Your introduction should state the source of your selection and should properly relate the incident to the main article.

5. Find some story (in prose or verse) in which the explanatory matter is brought in after the story is under way (as in Lochinvar, p. 20).

6. Study the poems mentioned on page 36, with special reference to introduction. Write the story of one of these, with an introduction; without an introduction.

7. Study the following stories by Irving and proceed as in Exercise 6: — "The Spectre Bridegroom," "The Adventure of my Uncle," "The Mysterious Picture."

8. Pick out one or two incidents from "Robinson Crusoe" or Stevenson's "Kidnapped," and see how little preliminary explanation will suffice to make them into complete stories.

NOTE. — The students may be required to write this preliminary matter in the form of a brief introduction; or one student may report on the subject orally, and the rest may join in the discussion. In either case, stress should be laid on brevity. If an incident is selected which needs no introduction, that fact should be emphasized.

9. Turn to such plays of Shakspere as you have read, and observe the way in which they begin. Compare what was said of "Julius Cæsar" on page 44.

10. Report, in the form of a story, the endeavors of Cassius to bring Brutus into the conspiracy. Begin with an introduction, stating the circumstances.

11. Tell the same story without an introduction. Begin with a conversation between Brutus and Cassius.

12. Study the introductory paragraph in "The Story of a Fire" (p. 13), and then write a similar introduction for some story of a startling event or description of a striking scene.

CONCLUSION (p. 46)

1. Read the narrative selections contained in this book, with particular reference to the conclusion of each, observing whether it is a brief summary, a moral or logical conclusion, or a mere formal ending.

Write a brief statement to suit each case, giving reasons for your decision. If the formal conclusion is omitted, show why it is unnecessary.

2. From the material which you are studying in history or literature, select a brief narrative in which the author has made a good conclusion. Bring your story to the class and present the chief characteristics of the conclusion.

3. Find a short anecdote which has a distinct point and ends when the point is made. How do the details lead up to the point?

4. Copy some fable in which the moral is expressed. Recite your fable to the class, and be prepared to discuss the effect of the moral.

5. Invent a fable. Try to tell it so that no moral is necessary, but state in a brief sentence the truth that you intend the fable to illustrate. Bring the fable to the class for criticism, and there decide whether the moral should be appended or not.

6. Examine the stories in Kipling's "Jungle Book" with reference to conclusion. Write one of them from memory.

7. Examine the poems and stories mentioned in Exercises 6 and 7 on page 81, with reference to conclusion.

8. Examine a few well-known stories, — "Ivanhoe," "A Tale of Two Cities," "Silas Marner," one of Cooper's tales, some of Miss Jewett's or Miss Wilkins's shorter stories, or "Tom Brown's School-Days," and observe the concluding chapter, paragraph, or sentence in each. Be prepared to describe these conclusions in an oral report to the class.

9. Select an incident from "Cranford." Write it in your own words, with a suitable conclusion.

Point of View (p. 49)

The following exercises afford practice in telling the same story from different **points of view.** Use either the first or the third person, as seems better in each case. Observe that the incidents that are included depend in part on **who is telling the story.**

1. Tell the story of "The Wreck of the Hesperus" as if you were the sailor who discovered the child's body on the beach.

2. Tell the story of "Lochinvar" as an historian might tell it. Observe how the order differs from that of the poem.

3. Tell the same story as the hero might have told it years afterward; as the bride might have told it; as the bride's father might have told it.

4. Study Wordsworth's "We are Seven," and tell the story as the little girl might have told it to her mother.

5. Tell the story of "Mabel Martin" as Mabel might have told it.

6. Read Jean Ingelow's poem, "The High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire." Then write the story in a manner likely to interest children.

7. Tell the story of a railroad accident (1) as a good reporter would tell it; (2) as a child who was injured might tell it; (3) as a spectator might report it; (4) as a man who escaped unhurt might tell it; (5) as the engineer might tell it.

8. A boys' club is studying history. Tell them the story of "Paul Revere's Ride."

First, explain briefly the conditions that made the ride necessary. Then proceed with the story itself. Remember that the boys will not listen unless you make the subject interesting.

Compare the order of your story with the order in Longfellow's poem. How does Longfellow introduce the facts that you have put into your introductory statement? Are there other differences of order?

9. Two boys are rowing on a lake. Their boat capsizes. One of them swims to the shore; the other cannot swim, but clings to the skiff until he is rescued by a bystander.

Describe the rescue (1) in the words of the boy who swam to the shore, deserting his companion; (2) as if you were the bystander; (3) as if you were the father of the boy who clung to the skiff.

10. Two boys are playing ball in the street. Suddenly their ball crashes through a large plate-glass window in a drug store. One boy runs away and hides behind a bush. The other boy walks up to the drug store, explains the accident to the proprietor, and asks what he can do to make up for the damage.

Tell the story (1) as the second boy might have told it upon his return home, including the conversation between him and the proprietor; (2) as the angry druggist might have told it; (3) from the point of view of the boy who hid behind the bush.

11. A little girl follows a procession. She is lost and tries to find her way home. She is met and recognized by the milkman, who carries her with him over his route, and returns her to her home in the evening.

(1) Tell the story as if it had happened in the city; (2) in the country; (3) report the incident for a newspaper; (4) tell it from the milkman's point of view, inserting conversation; (5) give the

child's version of the incident; (6) tell the whole story as the child's mother might have told it to a sympathetic neighbor some days afterwards.

12. Boys follow an organ grinder, making an uproar whenever he attempts to play.

Tell the story (1) from the boys' point of view; (2) from that of the organ grinder; (3) from that of a citizen who observed the proceedings and sent the boys home.

13. Mary Blake has come to a city school from her home in the country. She is not accustomed to the routine of the new school and sometimes makes awkward mistakes.

The teacher asks Mary to take a note to the principal. Mary attempts to leave the room, but opens the closet door instead and walks into the closet. The pupils laugh boisterously, and she leaves the room in confusion. The teacher reproves the class.

Write the story (1) as Mary told it to her mother; (2) as a sympathetic girl friend told it; (3) as a chivalrous boy might have told it to a comrade after school.

14. A boy of fourteen is fishing from a wharf. A child of four is playing on the wharf and falls into the water. The boy, who is a good swimmer, throws off his jacket, plunges into the water, and rescues the child.

Write the story (1) as the child's mother might have told it; (2) as if you were a newspaper reporter; (3) in a modest, straightforward manner, as the boy might tell it.

15. A boy of ten visits the zoölogical gardens with his father. Tell the story of his visit (1) as the father might tell it; (2) as the boy might tell it; (3) as the boy's mother, who stayed at home, might tell it.

Setting or Background (p. 52)

1. Review the exercises on Introduction (pp. 80–81), observing to what extent the introduction determines the setting in each case.

2. Examine five of Hawthorne's "Twice-Told Tales" with reference to setting.

3. Write stories suggested by those mentioned in the exercises on p. 81, but with a different setting.

4. Write a story about something which happened on a rainy day in the mountains; during a moonlight sail on the lake; in a

snowstorm ; in New York (*a*) under Dutch government, (*b*) under English government, (*c*) in Revolutionary times.

5. Write a story in which the setting is taken from modern city life ; from life in ancient Rome ; in the Arctic regions; in Arabia ; at sea ; on the prairie ; on a coral island.

6. Write a story suggested by the San Francisco earthquake. You may secure your materials from the papers and magazines in which it was described. Your story may be imaginary, suggested by descriptions which you have read, or based upon an actual experience.

7. Read the first chapter of "Ivanhoe," to discover (1) what the author has included in his introduction, and (2) how the conversation between Gurth and Wamba adds to your knowledge of the relation between Saxon and Norman, at the time of the story. Why is this relation so emphasized in the story? In what other places and ways is it indicated?

8. Tell a story with a setting similar to that in Mr. Kipling's "Rikki-tikki-tavi."

9. Write a story entitled "Adrift." Think of the setting before you begin.

10. Tell the story of Darnay's trial at the Old Bailey. Give particular attention to setting.[1]

Conversation (p. 59)

1. Imagine yourself a witness of the fire described by Mr. Riis (p. 13). On returning home, you tell your sister what you have seen and heard. Report the conversation in such a manner as to rehearse the story of the fire.

2. Tell the story of Wordsworth's "We are Seven," entirely in the third person, omitting direct quotations. Compare your story with the poem, noting the effect of the conversation.

3. Bring to the class some story (either in verse or prose) which is told chiefly by means of conversation. Read it to the class, and ask questions to direct their study of the story.

4. Read to the class a selection from Cooper in which the narrative is carried on by means of conversation.

[1] The Exercises in Description (pp. 134–144) afford opportunity for further practice in setting.

2. The Palmer aids Isaac. (In gratitude, Isaac furnishes Ivanhoe with armor and thus enables him to enter the tournament.)
3. The tournament. (This introduces the Black Knight [King Richard] and brings the wounded Ivanhoe under Rebecca's care.)
4. Prince John suggests that De Bracy marry Rowena. (This leads to the capture of Cedric's party, their imprisonment at Torquilstone, and the attack on the castle.)

3. Make an outline (as in Exercise 2) for part of "A Tale of Two Cities"; "Treasure Island"; "Kidnapped"; "Lorna Doone."

Miscellaneous Exercises

1. You have been spending the vacation with a friend who lives in another state. Write to your friends at home, giving an account of your vacation.

2. You have travelled by sea from Savannah to Boston. In a letter to a friend of your own age, tell some of the incidents of your passage.

3. Write a letter to an old gentleman who is a friend of yours, describing a day which you have spent in the scene of his boyhood.

4. Write to a child, relating an amusing incident which has happened in your experience.

5. Tell the story of Washington's winter at Valley Forge; of Arnold's treason; of the death of Wolfe. How do these stories illustrate character?

6. Select from the writings of Thoreau, Mr. John Burroughs, Mr. Ernest Thompson Seton, or Mr. William J. Long some account of the life of an animal. Note particularly the details which the writer has observed and has introduced into his account.

7. Imagine that a stranger, perhaps a foreigner, comes to your town as Franklin went to Philadelphia. Tell the story of his first day as he might have related it afterwards.

8. Tell the story of a boy who was lost in the woods and was compelled to spend the night there. Describe his anxiety when he realized that he had lost his way, his efforts to find it, his night in the woods, and the accident by which he found his way out.

CHAPTER III

DESCRIPTION

Four characteristic examples of **description,** in different styles, are printed on pages 89–95, and these should be carefully read before the discussion of the subject is taken up (p. 96).

The first, "The Inn Kitchen," from Irving's "Sketch Book," gives a lively picture of common life. It is written in an easy but highly finished style.

The second, "An Iceberg," from Dana's "Two Years before the Mast," is full of color and movement; in style it is direct and unpretentious.

The third, "The Old Boat," from Dickens's "David Copperfield," is a good example of the use of details to produce the effect of reality.

The fourth, Miss Mitford's "Country in Winter," from "Our Village," is somewhat more formal; it expresses the feelings of a cultivated mind toward nature.

I. THE INN KITCHEN[1]

By Washington Irving

During a journey that I once made through the Netherlands, I had arrived one evening at the *Pomme d'Or*, the principal inn of a small Flemish village. It was after the hour of the *table d'hôte*, so that I was obliged to make a solitary supper from the relics of its ampler board. The weather was chilly; I was seated alone in one end of a great gloomy dining-room, and, my repast being over, I had the prospect before me of a long

[1] From "The Sketch Book" (New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons).

breaking and tumbling down of huge pieces; together with its nearness and approach, which added a slight element of fear, all combined to give to it the character of true sublimity. The main body of the mass was, as I have said, of an indigo color, its base crusted with frozen foam; and as it grew thin and transparent toward the edges and top, its color shaded off from a deep blue to the whiteness of snow.

It seemed to be drifting slowly toward the north, so that we kept away and avoided it. It was in sight all the afternoon; and when we got to leeward of it, the wind died away, so that we lay-to quite near it for a great part of the night. Unfortunately, there was no moon, but it was a clear night, and we could plainly mark the long, regular heaving of the stupendous mass, as its edges moved slowly against the stars, now revealing them, and now shutting them in. Several times in our watch loud cracks were heard, which sounded as though they must have run through the whole length of the iceberg, and several pieces fell down with a thundering crash, plunging heavily into the sea. Toward morning, a strong breeze sprang up, and we filled away, and left it astern, and at daylight it was out of sight.

III. THE OLD BOAT[1]

By Charles Dickens

Ham was waiting for us at the public-house; and asked me how I found myself, like an old acquaintance. I did not feel, at first, that I knew him as well as he knew me, because he had never come to our house since the night I was born, and naturally he had the advantage of me. But our intimacy was much advanced by his taking me on his back to carry me home. He was, now, a huge, strong fellow of six feet high, broad in proportion, and round-shouldered; but with a simpering boy's face and curly light hair that gave him quite a sheepish look. He was dressed in a canvas jacket, and a pair of such very stiff trousers that they would have stood quite as well alone, without any legs in them. And you could n't so properly have said he wore a hat, as that he was covered in a-top, like an old building, with something pitchy.

[1] From "David Copperfield."

Ham carrying me on his back and a small box of ours under his arm, and Peggotty carrying another small box of ours, we turned down lanes bestrewn with bits of chips and little hillocks of sand, and went past gas-works, rope-walks, boat-builders' yards, shipwrights' yards, ship-breakers' yards, caulkers' yards, riggers' lofts, smiths' forges, and a great litter of such places, until we came out upon the dull waste I had already seen at a distance; when Ham said, "Yon 's our house, Mas'r Davy!"

I looked in all directions, as far as I could stare over the wilderness, and away at the sea, and away at the river, but no house could *I* make out. There was a black barge, or some other kind of superannuated boat, not far off, high and dry on the ground, with an iron funnel sticking out of it for a chimney and smoking very cosily; but nothing else in the way of a habitation that was visible to *me*.

"That 's not it?" said I. "That ship-looking thing?"

"That 's it, Mas'r Davy," returned Ham.

If it had been Aladdin's palace, roc's egg and all, I suppose I could not have been more charmed with the romantic idea of living in it. There was a delightful door cut in the side, and it was roofed in, and there were little windows in it; but the wonderful charm of it was, that it was a real boat which had no doubt been upon the water hundreds of times, and which had never been intended to be lived in, on dry land. That was the captivation of it to me. If it had ever been meant to be lived in, I might have thought it small, or inconvenient, or lonely; but never having been designed for any such use, it became a perfect abode.

It was beautifully clean inside, and as tidy as possible. There was a table, and a Dutch clock, and a chest of drawers, and on the chest of drawers there was a tea-tray with a painting on it of a lady with a parasol, taking a walk with a military-looking child who was trundling a hoop. The tray was kept from tumbling down, by a Bible; and the tray, if it had tumbled down, would have smashed a quantity of cups and saucers and a teapot that were grouped around the book. On the walls there were some common colored pictures, framed and glazed, of scripture subjects; such as I have never seen since in the hands of pedlars, without seeing the whole interior of Peggotty's brother's house again, at one view. Abraham in red going to sacrifice Isaac in blue, and Daniel in yellow cast into a den of green lions, were the

DESCRIPTION AND EXPOSITION

Description, in the larger sense, includes two distinct kinds of composition.

The description of a machine, for instance, usually consists in an exact account of its various parts and of the way in which they are put together. The botanical description of a plant is of much the same kind. Similarly, we can so describe a house by giving its dimensions, etc., that the reader may draw an accurate plan of the building. All such description is **explanatory;** its sole object is to make the reader **understand.**

Contrast the following passages, the first describing the human hand, the second describing a night scene in London: —

The skeleton of the hand exhibits, in the region which we term the wrist, and which is technically called the *carpus* — two rows of closely fitted polygonal bones, four in each row, which are tolerably equal in size. The bones of the first row with the bones of the forearm form the wrist joint, and are arranged side by side, no one greatly exceeding or overlapping the rest. — HUXLEY.

Black night lay over the city, and silence; the river flowed unseen through the darkness; but a thousand golden points of fire mapped out the lines of the Embankment and the long curves of the distant bridges. The infrequent sounds that could be heard were strangely distinct, even when they were faint and remote. There was a slight rustling of wind in the trees below the window. — WILLIAM BLACK.

We feel the difference instantly. On what does it depend? The answer is, "On the different purpose of the writer." In descriptions of the first kind, the writer's object is, as we have seen, to **explain;** he appeals to our **understanding.** In those of the second kind, his object is to call up in our minds the same picture that he has in

his own. He appeals not so much to our understanding as to our **imagination.** In the one case the writer tries to make us **understand;** in the other, he tries to make us **see and feel.**

This distinction is of much practical importance; for the methods followed in the two kinds of description differ in many particulars. All scientific and technical description belongs to the first class; all "literary" and poetical description to the second. For convenience we shall hereafter call the first kind **exposition,** and shall confine the term **description** to the second.

Leaving **exposition** to be discussed by-and-by,[1] we shall now pass to the study of **description** in the more limited sense.

NOTE. — The student should not infer that the use of the term *description* in the larger sense is incorrect, merely because it is convenient to limit the application of the word in the present discussion. Many terms are well established in both a general and a particular meaning. Besides, there can be no sharp line drawn between description and exposition. Thus the introduction in "A Tale of Two Cities" is addressed both to the understanding and to the imagination. It would be easy to make out a continuous series, from exposition pure and simple to the most highly wrought poetical description.

PICTURES AND DESCRIPTIONS

Suppose you wish to make a friend see, in his mind's eye, some place or object that has interested you, and to make him realize the impression that it has produced upon your own mind and feelings. There are two ways of doing this: (1) by means of a **picture;** (2) by means of words, — that is, by a **description.** Let us study these two ways and consider what advantages each has over the other.

[1] See Chapter IV.

glitter of coal, are borne along to the town of St. Ogg's, which shows its aged, fluted red roofs and the broad gables of its wharves between the low, wooded hill and the brink, tingeing the water with a soft purple hue under the transient glance of this February sun.

Far away on each hand stretch the rich pastures and the patches of dark earth, made ready for the seed of broad-leaved green crops, or touched already with the tint of the tender-bladed autumn-sown corn. There is a remnant still of the last year's golden clusters of beehivė ricks rising at intervals beyond the hedgerows; and everywhere the hedgerows are studded with trees: the distant ships seem to be lifting their masts and stretching their red-brown sails close among the branches of the spreading ash. Just by the red-roofed town the tributary Ripple flows with a lively current into the Floss. How lovely the little river is, with its dark, changing wavelets! It seems to me like a living companion while I wander along the bank and listen to its low, placid voice, as to the voice of one who is deaf and loving. I remember those large, dipping willows. I remember the stone bridge. And this is Dorlcote Mill.

In the first paragraph we have the Floss *hurrying* on, the tide *rushing to meet it*, the *fresh-scented* fir-planks *borne along*, the *transient glance;* in the second paragraph, the *lively current*, the *changing wavelets*, the *low, placid voice* of the river. If you should cut out these details, the description would be tame and lifeless. Indeed, Dana points out, after describing the iceberg (p. 91), how helpless a painter would be to express its true effect.

ACTION IN DESCRIPTION

We have seen that one of the chief advantages which a description has over a picture consists in its power to express **movement** and **action.**

In real life we seldom sit still as we note one detail of a scene after another. We move about, and observe

the details in that way. This fact suggests a good method of writing the introduction in a descriptive essay, and also an easy means of passing from one detail or phase of the subject to the next. Dana in his description of an iceberg (p. 91) tells how the cook "put his head down the scuttle and told us to come on deck and see the finest sight that we had ever seen"; and toward the end he remarks that the berg "seemed to be drifting slowly toward the north, so that we kept away and avoided it."

So in observing a person, we watch his movements, and we may converse with him and note the tone of his voice or the changing expressions of his face. George Eliot describes Dinah Morris (p. 118) as she walks out to address the people; presently she remarks that Dinah "stood with her left hand toward the descending sun; and leafy boughs screened her from its rays"; and she closes by noting what some of the spectators did as they watched the speaker (p. 119). Such little actions keep the description from being a mere inventory or catalogue of Dinah's features.

In the following description, from Hawthorne's "House of the Seven Gables," Mr. Pyncheon's action in looking round at the carpenter and then nonchalantly returning to his coffee, gives us a far better idea of his bearing than we should have got from a mere statement that "his demeanor was calm, and he had an air of serene and unconscious hauteur": —

At a small table, before a fire of English sea-coal, sat Mr. Pyncheon, sipping coffee, which had grown to be a very favorite beverage with him in France. He was a middle-aged and really handsome man, with a wig flowing down upon his shoulders; his coat was of blue velvet, with lace on the borders and at the buttonholes; and the firelight glistened on the spacious breadth of his waistcoat, which was flowered all over with gold. On the

entrance of Scipio, ushering in the carpenter, Mr. Pyncheon turned partly round, but resumed his former position, and proceeded deliberately to finish his cup of coffee, without immediate notice of the guest whom he had summoned to his presence. It was not that he intended any rudeness or improper neglect, — which, indeed, he would have blushed to be guilty of, — but it never occurred to him that a person in Maule's station had a claim on his courtesy, or would trouble himself about it one way or the other.

If a description, then, is to represent real life, it should include touches of **movement** and **action.**

Some descriptions have so much action that they may almost be called stories, and we have seen that almost all stories need some description (p. 52).

SENSATIONS IN DESCRIPTION

A good writer is not content to include in a description only such things as would go into a picture. He takes care, as we have observed, to introduce objects in **motion,** particularly living creatures. Besides what can be **seen,** he brings in **sounds, bodily feelings,** and other matters of **sensation.** Thus we get the full impression that the scene or object makes upon him.

Observe the **variety of sensations** which Cowper expresses in the following extract from "The Winter Walk at Noon": —

> The night was winter in his roughest mood,
> The morning sharp and clear. But now at noon,
> Upon the southern side of the slant hills,
> And where the woods fence off the northern blast,
> The season smiles, resigning all its rage,
> And has the warmth of May. The vault is blue
> Without a cloud, and white without a speck
> The dazzling splendor of the scene below.

Again the harmony comes o'er the vale,
And through the trees I view the embattled tower
Whence all the music. I again perceive
The soothing influence of the wafted strains,
And settle in soft musings as I tread
The walk, still verdant, under oaks and elms,
Whose outspread branches overarch the glade.
The roof, though movable through all its length
As the wind sways it, has yet well sufficed,
And, intercepting in their silent fall
The frequent flakes, has kept a path for me.
No noise is here, or none that hinders thought.
The redbreast warbles still, but is content
With slender notes, and more than half suppressed.
Pleased with his solitude, and flitting light
From spray to spray, where'er he rests he shakes
From many a twig the pendent drops of ice,
That tinkle in the withered leaves below.

Here the *roughness* of the night and the *sharp, clear* weather of the morning are contrasted with the *warmth of May*, which the noon brings with it in sheltered spots. The sense of **sound** is also appealed to: we hear the *wafted strains* of the chimes from the church tower across the valley, the *slender notes* of the robin, and the *tinkle* of the icicles falling among the withered leaves. The mood which the sights and sounds induce in the poet is also expressed: "the soothing influence of the wafted strains" and the "soft musings" which fill his mind as he walks.

None of these sensations and feelings could be expressed — though some of them might be suggested — in a painting. A picture appeals primarily to the eye, a description may appeal to the other senses as well; and, in real life, some of the most vivid associations we have are called up by other senses than that of sight. We can test this by a simple experiment.

Recollect the smell of the moist earth in spring, or of lumber, or of seaweed, or the queer fishy odor of fresh water, and see

if it does not bring vividly before your mind some place where you have been or some experience that you have had.

Specific sensations, then, have the power of calling up, in the mind of the reader, scenes, objects, or experiences with which they have been associated in the past. The value of such **associations** in descriptive writing is well set forth by Goldsmith in one of his essays: —

We are more affected by reading Shakspere's description of Dover Cliff,[1] and Otway's picture of the Old Hag,[2] than we should be were we actually placed on the summit of the one, or met in reality with such a beldame as the other; because in reading these descriptions we refer to our own experience, and perceive, with surprise, the justice of the imitations.

In the two following descriptions, notice how much of the vividness and power comes from the **variety of the sensations** expressed, and from the associations which these call up in the mind.

The gray sea and the long black land;
And the yellow half-moon large and low;
And the startled little waves that leap
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;
Three fields to cross till a farm appears;
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And blue spurt of a lighted match,
And a voice less loud, through its joys and fears,
Than the two hearts beating each to each! — BROWNING.

The sea is calm to-night;
The tide is full; the moon lies fair
Upon the Straits; on the French coast the light

[1] In "King Lear."

[2] In "The Orphan." The passage is quoted by Addison in "The Spectator," No. 117.

Gleams, and is gone ; the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window : sweet is the night air !
Only from the long line of spray
Where the ebb meets the moon-blanched sand,
Listen ! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves suck back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in. — MATTHEW ARNOLD.[1]

In the following descriptive sonnet,[2] Wordsworth expresses, by means of words denoting sensations, a deep feeling of calm and content.

UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE

Earth has not anything to show more fair :
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty :
This city now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning ; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky,
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendor, valley, rock, or hill ;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !
The river glideth at his own sweet will :
Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep ;
And all that mighty heart is lying still !

Similarly the book of Job (Chapter IV, verses 13–17) expresses the feeling of dread and awe by describing the bodily sensations which go with it.

[1] From "Dover Beach."

[2] For the structure of a sonnet, see pp. 485–486.

THE BEGINNING OF A DESCRIPTION

The first sentence in a description is often used to bring before the mind the **general picture** or **main impression,** and what follows fills in the details. So, for example, in Ruskin's description of the South Wind: —

It was the most extraordinary looking little gentleman he had ever seen in his life. He had a very large nose, slightly brass-colored; his cheeks were very round and very red, and might have warranted a supposition that he had been blowing a refractory fire for the last eight-and-forty hours; his eyes twinkled merrily through long silky eyelashes, his moustaches curled twice round like a corkscrew on each side of his mouth, and his hair, of a curious mixed pepper-and-salt color, descended far over his shoulders. He was about four feet six in height, and wore a conical pointed cap of nearly the same altitude, decorated with a black feather some three feet long. His doublet was prolonged behind into something resembling a violent exaggeration of what is now termed a "swallow tail," but was much obscured by the swelling folds of an enormous black, glossy-looking cloak, which must have been very much too long in calm weather, as the wind, whistling round the old house, carried it clear out from the wearer's shoulders to about four times his own length.

Similarly, the brief description on p. 96 begins, "Black night lay over the city, and silence." In the extract from "Dover Beach" (p. 104), "The sea is calm to-night" prepares us for all the vivid particulars that follow. Dickens begins his description of Marseilles in August (p. 113) with the simple sentence, "Thirty years ago, Marseilles lay in the burning sun one day."

In a longer description, some introductory matter may be necessary. Thus, in the extract from Dana (p. 91), there is a whole paragraph before the iceberg appears, and this paragraph is all to the purpose. Besides explaining the circumstances, it enlivens the scene by means of action, and rouses our curiosity and expectation.

Formal introductions are seldom in place in descriptive writing. What has been already said about the introduction in a story (pp. 44–46), applies to description with even greater force.

DESCRIPTION OF A PLACE

Most of us use **description** more frequently in letter-writing than in any other kind of composition. We often wish to give a friend at a distance some idea of our own town or neighborhood; and, when away from home, we are always eager to let our families know what our new surroundings are like. Thus skill in description is of constant utility in our everyday life.

The great Dr. Arnold of Rugby once wrote as follows to one of his old pupils, who was living in Tasmania: —

> Will you describe the general aspect of the country round Hobart's Town? To this day I never could meet with a description of the common face of the country about New York, or Boston, or Philadelphia, and therefore I have no distinct idea of it. Is your country plain or undulating; are your valleys deep or shallow, — curving, or with steep sides and flat bottoms? Are your fields large or small, parted by hedges or stone walls, with single trees about them, or patches of wood here and there? Are there many scattered houses, and what are they built of, — brick, wood, or stone? And what are the hills and streams like, — ridges, or with waving summits? with plain sides, or indented with combes? full of springs or dry? And what is their geology? I can better fancy the actors when I have got a lively notion of the scene in which they are acting.

This letter sums up very well the things that one would like to know about a place where a friend happened to be living. Moreover, these are just the points that a good writer attends to instinctively. George Eliot, in the description of "The Valley of the Floss" (p. 99),

speaks of the wide plain, of the rich pastures and the patches of dark earth, of the hedgerows studded with trees, and of the "town of St. Ogg's, which shows its aged, fluted red roofs and the broad gables of its wharves between the low, wooded hill and the brink" of the river.

THE POINT OF VIEW IN DESCRIPTION

In describing a scene it is usually important — and sometimes necessary — to define or suggest **who is seeing it,** and **where he is** or **what he is doing** at the time. In other words, we must attend to the **point of view.**

In Matthew Arnold's description of the English Channel by moonlight (p. 104), it is the poet himself who is speaking, and the **point of view** is suggested by the words "Come to the window." Wordsworth (p. 105) describes London as he saw it, early in the morning, from Westminster Bridge. Washington Irving, in "The Inn Kitchen" (p. 90), describes the group in the kitchen as he saw them from the door.

In the following extract from Charles Kingsley's "Heroes," the river Anauros is described from the point of view of Jason, as he stands on the rocks about to plunge in: —

Jason was bold and hasty, and was just going to leap into the flood: and yet he thought twice before he leapt, so loud roared the torrent down, all brown from the mountain rains, and silver-veined with melting snow; while underneath he could hear the boulders rumbling like the tramp of horsemen or the roll of wheels, as they ground along the narrow channel, and shook the rocks on which he stood.

Irving makes the Nervous Gentleman describe "The Mysterious Picture"[1] as he saw it from the chair in which he had been sleeping before the fire: —

[1] In "Tales of a Traveller" (New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons).

In short, I had a violent fit of the nightmare. Some strange indefinite evil seemed hanging over me which I could not avert; something terrible and loathsome oppressed me which I could not shake off. I was conscious of being asleep, and strove to rouse myself, but every effort redoubled the evil; until gasping, struggling, almost strangling, I suddenly sprang bolt upright in my chair, and awoke.

The light on the mantel-piece had burnt low, and the wick was divided; there was a great winding-sheet made by the dripping wax on the side towards me. The disordered taper emitted a broad flaring flame, and threw a strong light on a painting over the fireplace which I had not hitherto observed. It consisted chiefly of a head, or rather a face, staring full upon me, with an expression that was startling. It was without a frame, and at the first glance I could hardly persuade myself that it was not a real face thrusting itself out of the dark oaken panel. I sat in my chair gazing at it, and the more I gazed, the more it disquieted me.

In all the examples cited, the point of view is **stationary.** In real life, however, we do not always stand or sit still as we note one detail of a scene after another. We move about, and observe the details in that way. Hence what is called the **moving point of view** is common in description.

Dana describes the drifting iceberg (p. 91) as he saw it from the moving ship. Cowper (p. 102) describes the winter sights and sounds as they impressed him during a leisurely walk at noon. In Browning's night-piece (p. 104), the speaker imagines himself as rowing rapidly to the cove and hurrying along the beach and across the fields to the farmhouse.

In the following passage from "The Heroes," Charles Kingsley describes the city of the Phæacians as it impressed the Argonauts when they entered the harbor and approached the quays: —

So they rowed into the harbor, among a thousand black-beaked ships, each larger far than the Argo, toward a quay of polished

stone. And they wondered at that mighty city, with its roofs of burnished brass, and long and lofty walls of marble, with strong palisades above. And the quays were full of people, merchants, and mariners, and slaves, going to and fro with merchandise among the crowd of ships. And the heroes' hearts were humbled, and they looked at each other and said, "We thought ourselves a gallant crew when we sailed from Iolcos by the sea; but how small we look before this city, like an ant before a hive of bees!"

In a famous passage in "The Lady of the Lake" (Canto II, xvi), barges are described as they are seen approaching the island. Here the point of view is stationary, but the objects themselves move. In the following description of a northeaster on Cape Cod,[1] the point of view is that of two men — Captain Eri and Ralph the electrician — who are walking along a strip of beach between a bay on one side and the open sea on the other.

Ralph was only too glad of the opportunity to see the finish of a rescuing expedition, and he said so. So they got into the oilskins again, pulled their "sou'westers" down over their ears, and started on the tramp to the life-saving station.

The electrician is not likely to forget that walk. The wind was, as the Captain said, at their backs, but it whistled in from the sea with terrific strength, and carried the sleet with it. It deluged them with water, and plastered them with flying seaweed and ice. The wet sand came in showers like hail, and beat against their shoulders until they felt the sting, even through their clothes. Toward the bay was nothing but gray mist, streaked with rain and sleet; toward the sea was the same mist, flying with the wind over such a huddle of tossing green and white as Ralph had never seen. The surf poured in, in rollers that leaped over each other's humped backs in their savage energy to get at the shore, which trembled as they beat upon it. The ripples from one wave had not time to flow back before those of the next came threshing in. Great blobs of foam shot down the

[1] From "Cap'n Eri, a Story of the Coast," by Joseph C. Lincoln (New York, A. S. Barnes & Company).

strand like wild birds, and the gurgle and splash and roar were terrific.

They walked as near the water line as they dared, because the sand was harder there. Captain Eri went ahead, hands in his pockets and head down. Ralph followed, sometimes watching his companion, but oftener gazing at the sea. At intervals there would be a lull, as if the storm giant had paused for breath, and they could see for half a mile over the crazy water; then the next gust would pull the curtain down again, and a whirl of rain and sleet would shut them in. Conversation meant only a series of shrieks, and they gave it up.

The point of view is sometimes defined at the beginning, sometimes revealed as the description proceeds. In the course of a long description, it may even change two or three times; but it should never change without notice. Confusion in this regard is fatal to that **unity of impression** which a description aims to produce.

A fine example of orderly change in the point of view is Hawthorne's description of Bald Summit and the country round.[1] Here the wood is described as it appeared to Eustace and the children while they walked through it; the top of the hill, as it appeared to the same party *looking up* from the verge of the wood; and the surrounding landscape as it appeared to them, *looking down* from the very summit.

"Howe's Masquerade," in Hawthorne's "Twice-Told Tales," gives a good description of the old Province House at Boston. The author imagines himself as guided through the building by Mr. Thomas Waite, who points out what is of interest as they go from room to room.

Stories, as we know (see p. 50), are often told from what is called "the omniscient point of view," the author assuming that he knows even what the actors think and feel. A similar method is frequently used in descriptions. Thus, in the extract on pp. 113–114, Dickens does not

[1] In "A Wonder Book."

represent himself as present at Marseilles, or as looking at the scene; he describes it as one having full knowledge of all the details, but you would find it impossible to imagine him in any situation from which he could see them all. Nevertheless, the description is as vivid as it can possibly be. It is somewhat analogous to that kind of picture which we call a "bird's-eye view." This style of description is difficult, and, in unskilled hands, is likely to become confused and blurred. A young writer will always do well to define his point of view accurately at the outset.

TIME IN DESCRIPTIONS

Closely connected with the point of view in description is the question of the **time.** To make a description vivid, you must often put it at a **particular season,** on a **definite day,** even at a **special hour.**

Read the following descriptions with this question in mind: —

And so we began our journey; sadly, under dripping trees and a leaden sky. The country we had to traverse was the same I had trodden on the last day of my march southwards, but the passing of a month had changed the face of everything. Green dells, where springs welling out of the chalk had made of the leafy bottom a fairies' home, strewn with mosses, — these were now swamps into which our horses sank to the fetlock. Sunny brows, whence I had viewed the champaign and traced my forward path, had become bare, windswept ridges. The beech woods, which had glowed with ruddy light, were naked now, — mere black trunks and rigid arms pointing to heaven. An earthy smell filled the air: a hundred paces away a wall of mist closed the view. We plodded on sadly, up hill and down hill; now fording brooks already stained in the flood water, now crossing barren heaths. — WEYMAN.[1]

[1] From "Under the Red Robe" (New York, Longmans, Green & Company).

AN AUGUST DAY IN MARSEILLES[1]

By Charles Dickens

Thirty years ago, Marseilles lay in the burning sun one day.

A blazing sun upon a fierce August day was no greater rarity in southern France then, than at any other time, before or since. Everything in Marseilles, and about Marseilles, had stared at the fervid sky, and been stared at in return, until a staring habit had become universal there. Strangers were stared out of countenance by staring white houses, staring white walls, staring white streets, staring tracts of arid road, staring hills from which verdure was burnt away. The only things to be seen not fixedly staring and glaring were the vines drooping under their load of grapes. These did occasionally wink a little, as the hot air barely moved their faint leaves.

There was no wind to make a ripple on the foul water within the harbor, or on the beautiful sea without. The line of demarcation between the two colors, black and blue, showed the point which the pure sea would not pass; but it lay as quiet as the abominable pool, with which it never mixed. Boats without awnings were too hot to touch; ships blistered at their moorings; the stones of the quays had not cooled, night or day, for months. Hindoos, Russians, Chinese, Spaniards, Portuguese, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Genoese, Neapolitans, Venetians, Greeks, Turks, descendants from all the builders of Babel, come to trade at Marseilles, sought the shade alike, — taking refuge in any hiding-place from a sea too intensely blue to be looked at, and a sky of purple, set with one great flaming jewel of fire.

The universal stare made the eyes ache. Towards the distant line of Italian coast, indeed, it was a little relieved by light clouds of mist, slowly rising from the evaporation of the sea, but it softened nowhere else. Far away the staring roads, deep in dust, stared from the hillside, stared from the hollow, stared from the interminable plain. Far away the dusty vines overhanging wayside cottages, and the monotonous wayside avenues of parched trees without shade, drooped beneath the stare of earth and sky. So did the horses with drowsy bells, in long files

[1] From "Little Dorrit."

of carts, creeping slowly towards the interior ; so did their recumbent drivers, when they were awake, which rarely happened ; so did the exhausted laborers in the fields. Everything that lived or grew was oppressed by the glare ; except the lizard, passing swiftly over rough stone walls, and the cicala, chirping his dry hot chirp, like a rattle. The very dust was scorched brown, and something quivered in the atmosphere as if the air itself were panting.

Blinds, shutters, curtains, awnings, were all closed and drawn to keep out the stare. Grant it but a chink or keyhole, and it shot in like a white-hot arrow.

Both of these descriptions are remarkably vivid ; and their vividness, as we notice, comes in part from the authors' care in **fixing the time.** We learn not merely how the place looks and what impressions it makes, but also what its appearance is and what these impressions are at a **point of time,** which is carefully defined. The importance of fixing the time in descriptions is particularly well illustrated in the first passage. Here the whole place seems to change with the season and the weather, and in consequence the effect that it produces on our feelings changes as well.

The character of your description, then, may depend on the season or the weather in which you depict the scene. Sunlight, clouds, rain, sunrise or sunset, crisp air or muggy, high wind or calm — these are influences which affect your feelings strongly and hence modify the impressions which you get of a place or a landscape. They should not be neglected, therefore, if you wish to reproduce those feelings in a description.

Notice the effectiveness of the cold night in the following description of the chapel from Keats's "Eve of Saint Agnes" : —

> His prayer he saith, this patient, holy man ;
> Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his knees,

And back returneth, meagre, barefoot, wan,
Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees :
The sculptured dead, on each side, seem to freeze,
Imprisoned in black, purgatorial rails :
Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat'ries,
He passeth by ; and his weak spirit fails
To think how they may ache in icy hoods and mails.

Note the effect of fixing the time in the descriptions quoted from Miss Mitford (p. 94), Black (p. 96), George Eliot (p. 100), Cowper (p. 102), Browning (p. 104), Matthew Arnold (p. 104), Wordsworth (p. 105), Irving (p. 109), and Stevenson (p. 130).

DESCRIPTION OF PERSONS

Nothing is harder than to describe the form and features of a **person** accurately, so that he will be recognized by a stranger. This difficulty may be illustrated by a familiar example. Suppose the police advertise the description of a criminal of whom they have no photograph. The chances are that several innocent persons will be arrested before the right man is caught. For such a description can do little more than give height and weight, complexion, color of hair and eyes, general shape of nose, and so on. The difference between persons consists in much finer points than these. Nearly half the people in the world are of "medium height," and have straight noses and either blue eyes or black. A poor photograph or drawing, or even a cheap cut in a daily paper, is more serviceable than such a description.

Yet, on the other hand, a written description can do much that a picture cannot. A picture, for example, can give little idea of how a person moves. It tells nothing of his manners, of his speech, of the sound of his voice,

of the fashion in which he pronounces his words. Yet our first impression of a new acquaintance depends, in large part, upon just such traits as these. Our liking for him is determined, perhaps, by his agreeable voice or his cordial way of speaking; often, too, by the charm of his smile or the way in which he looks at us while we are talking to him. Here, then, lie the strength and the opportunity of description as compared with portraiture.

In Richardson's "Clarissa Harlowe," the following description is given to the heroine to enable her to recognize a ruffian who is pursuing her: —

A sun-burnt, pock-fretten[1] sailor, ill-looking, raw-boned; his stature about six feet; a heavy eye, an over-hanging brow, a deck-treading stride in his walk; a couteau[2] generally by his side; lips parched from his gums, as if by staring at the sun in hot climates; a brown coat; a colored handkerchief about his neck; an oaken plant[3] in his hand near[4] as long as himself, and proportionably thick.

If we were to meet such a man, we should recognize him in an instant. Yet notice how little the description goes into details with respect to his separate features. First the author gives us a striking impression of the sailor's general appearance; then he mentions his height; then two peculiarities of his face, and his manner of walking; then the knife that hangs by his side; next, a strange expression of his lips; and finally his clothing and the great stick that he always carries. All these details fit together easily and naturally into one complete impression. If there were many more of them, we could hardly grasp the description as a whole. The effect would be scattering and confused.

[1] That is, *pock-marked.*
[2] That is, a *knife.*
[3] That is, a *stick* or *staff.*
[4] Old style for *nearly.*

The **description of a person,** then, must not include too many details. It should not attempt to be exhaustive.

Moreover, such a description should not try to portray every feature minutely. It may begin by giving the general impression which the person would produce at first sight. It may then reinforce this general impression by mentioning significant details, — as size, coloring, walk, tricks of manner, strongly marked features, and the like. In any case, the description should be compact, and expressed in vivid words.

Compare Macaulay's description of Samuel Johnson :—

As we close it [i.e. Boswell's " Life of Johnson "], the club-room is before us, and the table on which stands the omelet for Nugent, and the lemons for Johnson. There are assembled those heads which live forever on the canvas of Reynolds. There are the spectacles of Burke and the tall, thin form of Langton; the courtly sneer of Beauclerk and the beaming smile of Garrick ; Gibbon tapping his snuff-box, and Sir Joshua with his trumpet in his ear. In the foreground is that strange figure which is as familiar to us as the figures of those among whom we have been brought up — the gigantic body, the huge massy face, seamed with the scars of disease ; the brown coat, the black worsted stockings, the gray wig with the scorched foretop; the dirty hands, the nails bitten and pared to the quick. We see the eyes and mouth moving with convulsive twitches ; we see the heavy form rolling ; we hear it puffing ; and then comes the " Why, sir ! " and the " What then, sir ? " and the " No, sir ! " and the " You don't see your way through the question, sir ! "

Here Macaulay's vivid imagination, assisted by Sir Joshua Reynolds's paintings, reconstructs from Boswell's gossipy and rambling account the scene at the famous Club, dominated as it was by Johnson's vigorous personality. With a sure instinct for effective detail he selects from Boswell just those few touches which bring Johnson before us " in his habit as he lived."

CHARACTER IN DESCRIPTION

Most descriptions of persons aim to convey some idea of **character.** Thus the sailor in "Clarissa Harlowe" (see p. 116) was "ill-looking," and had a "heavy eye." We feel no doubt that he was a bad fellow.

George Eliot, in all her descriptions of Silas Marner, emphasizes his helplessness and his batlike ignorance of the world about him, — qualities which make him a very pathetic figure. Read her description of Dinah Morris, from "Adam Bede," with this question of character in mind: —

Dinah walked as simply as if she were going to market, and seemed as unconscious of her outward appearance as a little boy; there was no blush, no tremulousness, which said, "I know you think me a pretty woman, too young to preach"; no casting up or down of the eyelids, no compression of the lips, no attitude of the arms, that said, "But you must think of me as a saint." She held no book in her ungloved hands, but let them hang down lightly crossed before her, as she stood and turned her gray eyes on the people. There was no keenness in the eyes; they seemed rather to be shedding love than making observations; they had the liquid look that tells that the mind is full of what it has to give out, rather than impressed by external objects. She stood with her left hand towards the descending sun; and leafy boughs screened her from its rays; but in this sober light the delicate coloring of her face seemed to gather a calm vividness, like flowers at evening.

It was a small oval face, of a uniform transparent whiteness, with an egg-like line of cheek and chin, a full but firm mouth, a delicate nostril, and a low perpendicular brow, surmounted by a rising arch of parting, between smooth locks of pale reddish hair. The hair was drawn straight back behind the ears, and covered, except for an inch or two above the brow, by a net Quaker cap. The eyebrows, of the same color as the hair, were perfectly horizontal and firmly pencilled; the eyelashes, though no darker, were long and abundant; nothing was left blurred or unfinished. It

was one of those faces that make one think of white flowers with light touches of color on their pure petals. The eyes had no peculiar beauty beyond that of expression : they looked so simple, so candid, so gravely loving, that no accusing scowl, no light sneer, could help melting away before their glance.

Joshua Rann gave a long cough, as if he were clearing his throat in order to come to a new understanding with himself ; Chad Cranage lifted up his leather skull-cap and scratched his head ; and Wiry Ben wondered how Seth had the pluck to think of courting her.

Here the last lines in the second paragraph, which interpret Dinah's character, go a long way to fix our impression of her. To clinch the impression of Dinah's purity and elevation of character, George Eliot adds a sentence to show the effect which Dinah's appearance produced on the men who saw her. So Dickens ends his description of Mr. Jingle, in the " Pickwick Papers," with the sentence : —

His face was thin and haggard ; but an indescribable air of jaunty impudence and perfect self-possession pervaded the whole man.

And in " A Tale of Two Cities " he describes the Marquis d'Evrémonde as follows : —

He was a man of about sixty, handsomely dressed, haughty in manner, and with a face like a fine mask, — a face of a transparent paleness ; every feature in it clearly defined ; one set expression on it. The nose, beautifully formed otherwise, was very slightly pinched at the top of each nostril. In these two compressions, or dints, the only little change that the face ever showed resided. They persisted in changing color sometimes, and they would be occasionally dilated and contracted by something like a faint pulsation ; then they gave a look of treachery and cruelty to the whole countenance. Examined with attention, its capacity of helping such a look was to be found in the line of the mouth, and the lines of the orbits of the eyes, being much

too horizontal and thin; still, in the effect the face made, it was a handsome face, and a remarkable one.

De Quincey, after giving a detailed description of Mrs. Wordsworth, concludes with a single long sentence which shows how her appearance indicated her character: —

Indeed all faults, had they been ten times more and greater, would have been neutralized by that supreme expression of her features to the unity of which every lineament in the fixed parts, and every undulation in the moving parts, of her countenance concurred, viz., a sunny benignity — a radiant graciousness — such as in this world I never saw surpassed.

In fact, many of the commonest words and phrases of description imply or suggest character: as, — *hard-featured, melancholy air, stolid-looking, firm chin, smiling eyes.* Such words may make a description far more effective than a picture; for they give the reader a deeper understanding of the person described.

Note little traits, then, — a look, a movement, an expression, — which betray character and make that individual person different from every one else.

COMPARISON IN DESCRIPTION[1]

In describing a **place** you can often help your reader by giving him a general idea of the "lay of the land." Do not go into overmuch detail, however. Words will not take the place of a map.

Comparison with some well-known object will often be of assistance. Thus, a town lying in the bend of a river may be compared to a horseshoe, and different parts of the place may be located by referring them to the toe of

[1] Figures of speech which express or involve comparison are treated together in Part II, Chapter III. They may be profitably studied in connection with this subject.

the horseshoe, or the left heel, or the right heel, and so on. You will recall a number of similar comparisons that you have made in studying geography. Italy is often compared to a *boot;* Cape Cod to an *arm* bent at the elbow (hence it is sometimes called "the right arm of Massachusetts"); the great southern peninsula of Greece to a *mulberry leaf.* Any map will suggest similar comparisons for other places. Note also such geographical names as *Baldknob, Castle Rock, Mitre Mountain, Sugar Loaf Peak, Golden Gate, Balcony Falls, Serpent's Mouth.*

Stevenson's description of Monterey begins with this simple and graphic figure: —

> The Bay of Monterey has been compared . . . to a bent fishing-hook. Santa Cruz sits exposed at the shank, the mouth of the Salinas river is at the middle of the bend, and Monterey itself is cosily ensconced beside the barb. Thus the ancient capital of California faces across the bay, while the Pacific Ocean, though hidden by low hills and forest, bombards her left flank and rear with never-dying surf. In front of the town, the long line of sea-beach trends north and northwest, and then westward to enclose the bay.

Irving's description of an old château brings in a grotesque and striking comparison: —

> He perceived the turrets of an ancient château rising out of the trees of its walled park; each turret with its high conical roof of gray slate, like a candle with an extinguisher on it.

Such comparisons are useful, however, only when they are striking, and when the figure used is so simple that it is easily seen in the mind's eye. Few people can reconstruct an elaborate diagram mentally. Be careful, therefore, not to be led away by your own ingenuity into an over-detailed working-out of the comparison: that will only defeat your purpose of putting the scene graphically before the reader.

Comparison is also useful in describing **persons**. Bagehot's brief portrait of Sterne closes with a very graphic comparison: —

His appearance was curious, but yet refined. Eager eyes, a wild look, a long lean frame, and what he called a cadaverous bale of goods for a body, made up an odd exterior, which attracted notice, and did not repel liking. He looked like a scarecrow with bright eyes.

Lamb describes an old bookworm thus: —

With long poring he is grown almost into a book. He stood as passive as one by the side of the old shelves. I longed to new-coat him in Russia, and assign him his place. He might have mustered for a tall Scapula.

CONTRAST IN DESCRIPTION

The familiar principle of **contrast** applies to description as it does to other things. One quality or feature or trait of character of course stands out more if it is **set over against** another which is strikingly different from it. Notice the vivid effect of the contrast in the following little description in which Stevenson sums up the differences between Scotland and England: —

We have spoken of the material conditions, nor need much more be said of these; of the land lying everywhere more exposed, of the wind always louder and bleaker, of the black roaring winters, of the gloom of high-lying, old stone cities imminent on the windy seaboard; compared with the level streets, the warm coloring of the brick, the domestic quaintness of the architecture, among which English children begin to grow up and come to themselves in life.

The same method of contrast is well illustrated by a passage in De Quincey's "Confessions of an English Opium-Eater": —

In a cottage kitchen, but panelled on the wall with dark wood that from age and rubbing resembled oak, and looking more like a rustic hall of entrance than a kitchen, stood the Malay — his turban and loose trousers of dingy white relieved upon the dark panelling. He had placed himself nearer to the girl than she seemed to relish; though her native spirit of mountain intrepidity contended with the feeling of simple awe which her countenance expressed as she gazed upon the tiger-cat before her. And a more striking picture there could not be imagined than the beautiful English face of the girl, and its exquisite fairness, together with her erect and independent attitude, contrasted with the sallow and bilious skin of the Malay, enamelled or veneered with mahogany by marine air, his small, fierce, restless eyes, thin lips, slavish gestures and adorations. Half hidden by the ferocious-looking Malay was a little child from a neighboring cottage who had crept in after him, and was now in the act of reverting its head, and gazing upwards at the turban and the fiery eyes beneath it, whilst with one hand he caught at the dress of the young woman for protection.

Compare Irving's description of the French Marquis[1]: —

In truth, he was but a small descendant from such great warriors. When you looked at their bluff visages and brawny limbs, as depicted in their portraits, and then at the little Marquis with his spindle shanks, and his sallow lantern visage, flanked with a pair of powdered ear-locks, or *ailes de pigeon*,[2] that seemed ready to fly away with it, you could hardly believe him to be of the same race. But when you looked at the eyes that sparkled out like a beetle's from each side of his hooked nose, you saw at once that he inherited all the fiery spirit of his forefathers. In fact, a Frenchman's spirit never exhales, however his body may dwindle. It rather rarefies, and grows more inflammable, as the earthy particles diminish; and I have seen valor enough in a little fiery-hearted French dwarf to have furnished out a tolerable giant.

[1] From "The Adventure of my Uncle" in "Tales of a Traveller."

[2] That is, pigeon wings.

A DESCRIPTION IS NOT AN INVENTORY

In description, as in narration, the details need to be properly selected and well combined. A mere list of disconnected facts cannot properly be called a description.

Turn to Dickens's description of "The Old Boat" (p. 93). Make a list of the several details there mentioned. Read the list aloud. It is merely confusing; it gives no picture of the boat and its contents. Now read the description itself. Here are the same details that you included in your list. Yet they make a perfect picture of the cosy interior of the old vessel.

One reason for the difference is that in the description the separate facts and ideas are so **grouped** that they give you a number of clear impressions, and these are not too numerous for the mind to retain. Further, there is **variety** in expression. Your list was, of course, utterly monotonous; in "The Old Boat," on the contrary, the sentences are skilfully varied.

The importance of variety is further illustrated by George Eliot's description of Dinah Morris (pp. 118–119). This contains many separate details; yet they are so well grouped, and are expressed in a style so agreeably varied, that our interest never flags. When we have read the passage, we find that we have a vivid and consistent idea of Dinah's appearance and character, in which all the details are wrought into a single impression.

It is this skill in **grouping and in blending details** that distinguishes a description from a mere inventory.

In the two following descriptions notice how many details there are, and how skilfully they are blended into single impressions.

People this street, so ornamented [that is, with innumerable signs] with crowds of swinging chairmen, with servants bawling to clear the way, with Mr. Dean in his cassock, his lacquey marching before him; or Mrs. Dinah in her sack, tripping to chapel, her foot-boy carrying her ladyship's great prayer-book; with itinerant tradesmen, singing their hundred cries (I remember forty years ago, as boy in London city, a score of cheery, familiar cries that are silent now). Fancy the beaux thronging to the chocolate-houses, tapping their snuff-boxes as they issue thence, their periwigs appearing over the red curtains. Fancy Sacharissa, beckoning and smiling from the upper windows, and a crowd of soldiers brawling and bustling at the door — gentlemen of the Life Guards, clad in scarlet, with blue facings, and laced with gold at the seams; gentlemen of the Horse Grenadiers, in their caps of sky-blue cloth, with the garter embroidered on the front in gold and silver; men of the Halberdiers, in their long red coats, as bluff Harry left them, with their ruffs and velvet caps. — THACKERAY.

The lofty houses; the stately, though narrow and gloomy, streets, the splendid display of the richest goods and most gorgeous armor in the warehouses and shops around; the walks crowded by busy citizens of every description, passing and repassing with faces of careful importance or eager bustle; the huge wains, which transported to and fro the subject of export and import, the former consisting of broadcloths and serge, arms of all kinds, nails and iron-work, while the latter comprehended every article of use or luxury intended either for the consumption of an opulent city or received in barter and destined to be transported elsewhere — all these objects combined to form an engrossing picture of wealth, bustle, and splendor, to which Quentin had been hitherto a stranger. — SCOTT.

In the first passage there are several sentences, all of them filled with action. The whole makes a lively picture of a bustling London street in the time of George I.

In the second passage an enumeration of different objects is so managed, in the compass of one long sentence, as to convey a vivid impression of prosperous commercial activity.

Here again, as in the case of Dickens's "Old Boat" (p. 92) and of George Eliot's "Dinah Morris" (p. 118), if the sentences were broken up, and the separate facts and details were printed ás a list, the effect would be merely one of monotony and dull confusion. **Mere enumeration is not description.** You must select your details and combine them skilfully if you wish to give your reader a vivid and consistent idea of the scene or the person that you are describing.

THE CENTRAL POINT IN A DESCRIPTION

A description should lay emphasis on some one object or on a single impression, just as a picture centres in a definite point. In other words, a description, like a picture or any other work of art, must be **composed.**

If you are describing a **place,** your attention may centre on some particular feature of the landscape, — as, a certain house, or a great hill, or a river. Again, you may fix your mind mainly on the general effect of freshness and young green in the spring, or of warm luxuriance in summer. Or perhaps you will let the place serve merely as a background for the people who live in it. In this case, you will consider the place chiefly as it affects the inhabitants, their tastes, feelings, and manner of life.

Similarly, in describing a **person,** you should make some characteristic stand out vividly, just as in real life our impressions would focus on some particular trait or individual expression.

In each instance, the required emphasis will be produced by the selection of a different set of details. It is impossible to note every detail of any scene. You must omit the larger part of them. Selection, then, is

unavoidable. In making the selection, keep in mind the definite **point** or **effect** which the description is to produce.

Thus the following description of a "fierce mountain pony," by De Quincey, centres in the animal's fiendish temper. Every detail is selected and arranged with reference to this central point.

Generally it was a fierce mountain pony that he rode; and it was worth while to cultivate the pony's acquaintance, for the sake of understanding the extent to which the fiend can sometimes incarnate himself in a horse. I do not trouble the reader with any account of his tricks, and drolleries, and scoundrelising; but this I may mention, that he had the propensity ascribed many centuries ago to the Scandinavian horses for sharing and practically asserting his share in the angry passions of a battle. He would fight, or attempt to fight, on his rider's side, by biting, rearing, and suddenly wheeling about for the purpose of lashing out when he found himself within kicking range. This little monster was coal-black; and in virtue of his carcass, would not have seemed very formidable; but his head made amends — it was the head of a buffalo, or of a bison, and his vast jungle of mane was the mane of a lion. His eyes, by reason of this intolerable and unshorn mane, one did not often see, except as lights that sparkled in the rear of a thicket; but, once seen, they were not easily forgotten, for their malignity was diabolic.

Cowper, in a charming little description of his kitten, in a letter to Lady Hesketh, makes a special point of its playfulness: —

I have a kitten, my dear, the drollest of all creatures that ever wore a cat's skin. Her gambols are not to be described, and would be incredible, if they could. In point of size she is likely to be a kitten always, being extremely small of her age; but time, I suppose, that spoils everything, will make her also a cat. You will see her, I hope, before that melancholy period shall arrive, for no wisdom that she may gain by experience and reflection hereafter, will compensate the loss of her present hilarity. She is dressed in a tortoise-shell suit, and I know that you will delight in her.

Similarly, Dana emphasizes the flashing life and brilliancy of the iceberg (p. 91); Irving, the homely comfort of the inn kitchen (p. 90); Dickens, the cosiness of the Old Boat (p. 93); George Eliot, the unworldly loveliness of Dinah Morris (p. 118). In "Quentin Durward" (Chapter v), Lesly's peculiar scar is emphasized; and in the description of De la Marck (Chapter xxii) the central effect is his strange resemblance to a wild boar.

It is because of this skilful emphasis on a single effect that all these descriptions leave so clear and strong an impression.

A description, then, should have a distinct **effect** in view, just as a short story should lead up to a single point (see p. 37). Its excellence will depend largely on the skill with which the **details are selected and marshalled** in composition. A good description should make as clear and sharply defined an impression as a good picture.

The result of failing to select significant details and of neglecting point of view and unity of effect, is amusingly exhibited in the following paragraph, written by Goldsmith in ridicule of these faults: —

> Islington is a pretty, neat town, mostly built of brick, with a church and bells. It has a small lake, or rather pond, in the midst, though at present very much neglected. I am told it is dry in summer. If this be the case, it can be no very proper receptacle for fish; of which the inhabitants themselves seem sensible by bringing all that is eaten there from London.

Finally, whatever you select as the point or chief effect of your description must be your own choice, springing out of your own interests and experience. Every good description shows us not the scene merely, but the scene as it impresses the writer. If you visit a new place with your father, you cannot look at it with his eyes. His

knowledge of men and affairs will make him see a thousand things that escape your notice, — signs of a peculiar industry, for example, or the traits of an old-established population, or the rawness of a new settlement. On the other hand, he will neglect many things that strike your eye at once, — the looks and dress of the young men and women, picturesque shops, and the liveliness or quiet of the streets. Though you walk through the city side by side, you will each write home a different description of it.

It is a useful exercise to practice oral description,[1] — to describe, for instance, what you can see from a certain window or from the top of a hill. In preparing for such a recitation, you might jot down the main objects, and then settle upon the order in which they are to be mentioned, bearing in mind that they are to be so grouped as to give your audience a clear and unified impression. Practice of this kind is good training in observation, and will assist you both in your study of literature and in your own compositions. It may easily be extended to imaginary scenes or to those which you meet with in your reading. Thus you might ask yourself, "What did Webster see when he began his Bunker Hill oration?" The materials for an answer are furnished by the oration itself.

VOCABULARY IN DESCRIPTION

The strength and vividness of a description come, as we have already learned, from the power which language has to represent **sensations** of all kinds and to call up the **associations** which go with them.[2] To avail one's self of this power to the full requires, of course, a large vocabulary

[1] Compare the suggestions for oral narration (p. 78).
[2] See pp. 102–105.

and great skill in using it. The many specimens of description which we have studied in the preceding pages illustrate the **range and variety of words and phrases** needed in this kind of composition. Two more examples will now be given to emphasize this point.

The first example is the description of the coral island, from Stevenson's "Ebb Tide"[1]: —

About four in the morning, as the captain and Herrick sat together on the rail, there arose from the midst of the night, in front of them, the voice of breakers. Each sprang to his feet and stared and listened. The sound was continuous, like the passing of a train; no rise or fall could be distinguished; minute by minute the ocean heaved with an equal potency against the invisible isle; and as time passed, and Herrick waited in vain for any vicissitude in the volume of that roaring, a sense of the eternal weighed upon his mind. To the expert eye, the isle itself was to be inferred from a certain string of blots along the starry heaven. And the schooner was laid to and anxiously observed till daylight.

There was little or no morning bank. A brightening came in the east; then a wash of some ineffable, faint, nameless hue between crimson and silver; and then coals of fire. These glimmered awhile on the sea-line, and seemed to brighten and darken and spread out; and still the night and the stars reigned undisturbed. It was as though a spark should catch and glow and creep along the foot of some heavy and almost incombustible wall-hanging, and the room itself be scarce menaced. Yet a little after, and the whole east glowed with gold and scarlet, and the hollow of heaven was filled with the daylight.

The isle — the undiscovered, the scarce believed in — now lay before them and close aboard; and Herrick thought that never in his dreams had he beheld anything more strange and delicate. The beach was excellently white, the continuous barrier of trees inimitably green; the land perhaps ten feet high, the trees thirty more. Every here and there, as the schooner coasted northward, the wood was intermitted; and he could see clear over the inconsiderable strip of land (as a man looks over a wall) to the lagoon

[1] By permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

within; and clear over that, again, to where the far side of the atoll prolonged its pencilling of trees against the morning sky. He tortured himself to find analogies. The isle was like the rim of a great vessel sunken in the waters; it was like the embankment of an annular railway grown upon with wood. So slender it seemed amidst the outrageous breakers, so frail and pretty, he would scarce have wondered to see it sink and disappear without a sound, and the waves close smoothly over its descent.

The second example is Hawthorne's description of the pigs, from "The Blithedale Romance":—

I can nowise explain what sort of whim, prank, or perversity it was, that, after all these leave-takings, induced me to go to the pigsty, and take leave of the swine! There they lay, buried as deeply among the straw as they could burrow, four huge black grunters, the very symbols of slothful ease and sensual comfort. They were asleep, drawing short and heavy breaths, which heaved their big sides up and down. Unclosing their eyes, however, at my approach, they looked dimly forth at the outer world, and simultaneously uttered a gentle grunt; not putting themselves to the trouble of an additional breath for that particular purpose, but grunting with their ordinary inhalation. They were involved, and almost stifled and buried alive, in their own corporeal substance. The very unreadiness and oppression wherewith these greasy citizens gained breath enough to keep their life-machinery in sluggish movement, appeared to make them only the more sensible of the ponderous and fat satisfaction of their existence. Peeping at me, an instant, out of their small, red, hardly perceptible eyes, they dropped asleep again; yet not so far asleep but that their unctuous bliss was still present to them, betwixt dream and reality.

Here Hawthorne shows the highest command of style. His words and figures of speech not only express the meanings and suggestions that he wishes to convey, but the very heaviness and fulness of sound in "corporeal substance," "ponderous and fat satisfaction," and "unctuous bliss," contribute to the effect which he intends to produce.

The possibilities of poetic language in pure description are admirably illustrated by the account of Cleopatra's Barge in Shakspere's "Antony and Cleopatra" (Act II, Scene 2).

NOTE. — Materials for the study of **description of places** abound in books with which the students are familiar. They should be required to search for such material, and to bring specimens to the class for use in both critical (analytic) and constructive work. A free discussion, led by the teacher, may profitably follow the reading of a student's selection. In this discussion, however, the class should remember that true criticism points out excellences as well as defects.

The following citations will be of assistance: — Chaucer's "Knight's Tale," lines 1109–1136 (or Dryden's "Palamon and Arcite," Book II, lines 524–559); Spenser's "Faerie Queene," Book I, Canto I, stanza 34; Goldsmith's "Traveller" and "Deserted Village"; Byron's "Childe Harold," Canto III, stanzas 85–89, 92–93, "Siege of Corinth," 11; Wordsworth's "Margaret; or, The Ruined Cottage," lines 1–69 (pp. 5–7 [1]), "Prelude," Book I, lines 18–61 (pp. 69–70), Book XIV, lines 1–129 (pp. 194–197), "Excursion," Book II, lines 827–881 (pp. 198–200), "Poems on the Naming of Places" (pp. 104–108), etc.; Shelley's "Among the Euganean Hills," lines 66–141; Gray's "Letters" and "Journal in the Lakes" (Phelps's "Selections from Gray," pp. 93–125); Cowper's "Task," Book I, lines 210–364; Tennyson's "Princess" (Prologue) and "Enoch Arden"; Irving's "Sketch Book" and "Alhambra"; Green's "Short History of the English People," Chapter II, Section 9 (Château Gaillard); Scott's "Ivanhoe" (Chapters I, III, VII), "Quentin Durward" (Chapters III, XXVIII), "Pirate" (Chapters I, XXVIII), "Talisman" (Chapter VII), "Antiquary" (Chapter VII), "Bride of Lammermoor" (Chapter XVIII); the description of the Kashmir Serai in Kipling's "Kim" (Chapter I).

Narratives of travel, adventure, and discovery afford a great variety of material. Among these may be mentioned Hakluyt's "Voyages," and the works of Admiral Byron, Dana, Stanley, Kane, Nansen, Lord Dufferin, Mrs. Brassey, and Miss Mary Kingsley. See also Parkman's "Oregon Trail," Irving's "Astoria," Hawthorne's "Italian Note-Books," and Longfellow's "Outre-Mer." Most novels also abound in descriptive passages.

The "special correspondence" in the better class of newspapers contains many good descriptions of places, which may be utilized as specimens and as material for exercises. The students will easily perceive the difference between these articles and the more carelessly written columns of

[1] The page references are to Dowden's "Poems of Wordsworth" in the Athenæum Press Series.

the same journals. They may combine their study of such descriptions with their lessons in physical and political geography and in history.

Examples of personal description are plentiful; they may be found in most novels, in biographical works, and in descriptive poems. The following references will be of assistance: — Chaucer's "Prologue to the Canterbury Tales"; Dryden's "Character of a Good Parson" (from Chaucer); Dryden's "Palamon and Arcite," Book III, lines 38–89; Thomson's "Castle of Indolence," Canto I, stanzas 57–68; Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," lines 139–192; Scott's "Ivanhoe" (for example, Chapters II and XXII), "Kenilworth" (Chapters I, XXVI), "Quentin Durward" (Chapter II), and "Talisman" (Chapters I, XVII); Longfellow's "Tales of a Wayside Inn," "Evangeline," and "Courtship of Miles Standish"; the Sir Roger de Coverley papers in "The Spectator"; Mrs. Gaskell's "Cranford"; Green's "Short History of the English People," Chapter VI, Section 4 (Henry VIII), Chapter VII, Section 3 (Queen Elizabeth); Hawthorne's "House of the Seven Gables," "Twice-Told Tales," "Wonder Book," and "Tanglewood Tales"; Milton's "Paradise Lost," Book II; Irving's "Sketch Book," "Tales of a Traveller," and "Bracebridge Hall"; Kipling's "Kim," Chapter I, p. 6 (description of the lama); the close of Stevenson's essay on Villon; the description of the uncle in Stevenson's "Merry Men," Chapter II; Wordsworth's "Margaret" (lines 26 ff., p. 6), "Simon Lee" (pp. 27–28), "The Old Cumberland Beggar" (pp. 38–39), "Beggars" (pp. 132–133), "The Solitary Reaper" (pp. 178–179), "She was a Phantom of Delight" (p. 184), "Characteristics of a Child" (pp. 237–238).

There is much vivid description of persons in Mr. Austin Dobson's "Eighteenth Century Vignettes": see, for instance, the description of Horace Walpole in "A Day at Strawberry Hill"; that of Swift writing in bed, in the essay on "The Journal to Stella"; that of Richardson and his circle in "Richardson at Home." The last-mentioned example is the description of a picture. The same essay describes a portrait of Richardson.

An instructive series of descriptions of portraits may be found in Stevenson's "Some Portraits by Raeburn" (No. 8 in his "Virginibus Puerisque"). A graphic and amusing description of an old engraving is Mr. Jebb's account of the frontispiece to "Phalaris" (see his "Bentley" in the "English Men of Letters").

The first chapter of Emily Brontë's "Wuthering Heights" is a good example of description (both personal and local) in the form of narrative intermingled with dialogue.

George Borrow's account of his meeting with the poacher and his "fairy dog" in "Lavengro" (Chapter XII) combines, in a masterly way and in brief space, action, conversation, personal description, and description of scenery.

EXERCISES IN DESCRIPTION

Description and Exposition Compared (p. 96)

1. Find an example of explanatory description and one of literary or poetical description. Point out resemblances and differences between them.

2. Describe an old house, (*a*) as if you were considering it as an investment; (*b*) as if you had lived in it in childhood, and had returned to visit it after many years.

3. Compare some geographical description of a river with George Eliot's description of the Floss (p. 99).

4. Compare Dickens's description of Marseilles (pp. 113–114) with some description of a city or town in a guide book or geography.

Pictures and Descriptions Compared (p. 97)

1. Bring to the class a picture from some magazine, together with a description. In the class, exchange pictures with another student and describe (in writing) the picture which you have received in return. Compare your first description with that written by the student who receives your picture, criticising both descriptions in the comparison. (In the same way, your second description will be compared with that of the student who had first described the picture.)

After criticism, these descriptions may be read to the class and a vote may be taken upon their relative merits.

2. Describe a picture with which you are familiar. (1) Tell whether it is an oil painting, a water color, or a photograph or other reproduction; (2) tell its name; (3) state the general character of the subject, unless the name has indicated this. (This serves as an introduction to your description.)

Choose what seems to you the central or most important thing in the picture. Present that first to your hearers; then describe the other objects which appear in the picture, bringing them into relation to the central object. For example: — "A small water color hangs on the wall in my study. It represents a red rock rising out of the sea. The waves are breaking in white spray against it. The sea is gray-green, softened by the gray sky above. Behind the rock appear the gray sails of a fishing-boat,

and far away, hardly discernible against the sky, is the faint outline of a distant ship."

3. Write a description of some familiar scene (an assembly room at school, the interior of the children's room in a library, a dull gray morning at the market); then point out the elements in your description which a picture could not have included.

4. What features of "The Inn Kitchen" (p. 89) could have been represented by a picture?

5. What elements of "The Winter Walk at Noon" (p. 102) might a picture indicate? What features must a picture omit?

6. Imagine yourself as showing to a friend a photograph of a scene familiar to you. Give the description which is necessary to supplement the picture.

Action in Description (p. 100)

1. Describe a traveller, overburdened with bags and parcels, arriving at the railway station just too late for his train. Emphasize movement and action.

2. The fire alarm sounds in the night. You listen and discover that the fire is near your own house. You rise, dress, and hasten to the scene. Describe what you find there.

3. Visit some manufactory and describe the work which you see there. Try to describe the steady hum of the machines, the quick and continuous movement of the workers, the general activity and air of business.

4. Read Tennyson's "Song of the Brook" with special reference to words and phrases which denote or suggest movement.

5. Describe the unexpected coming of a thunderstorm on a summer afternoon. Everybody hurries to close windows, to fasten shutters, or to bring in chairs from the piazza. Show how narration and description mingle in such a composition.

6. Find in "Ivanhoe" or "A Tale of Two Cities" examples of action in description, and also of description of action.

Sensations in Description (p. 102)

1. Note the specific sensations suggested in this paragraph from "David Copperfield": —

"How well I recollect the kind of day it was! I smell the fog that hung about the place; I see the hoarfrost ghostly, through

it; I feel my rimy hair fall clammy on my cheek; I look along the dim perspective of the schoolroom, with a spluttering candle here and there to light up the foggy morning, and the breath of the boys wreathing and smoking in the raw cold as they blow upon their fingers, and tap their feet upon the floor."

Write a similar description, keeping in mind some familiar scene.

2. In "An August Day in Marseilles" (p. 113), Dickens makes emphatic the intense and unmitigated heat, subordinating the other elements of his description to secure this effect. Study the description, to see by what means this specific sensation is intensified.

3. Study the following description from Goldsmith's "Deserted Village." Explain the use of the descriptive words or phrases which you find in the lines, particularly those which express sound or movement. What does the description tell that a picture could not represent?

> Sweet was the sound, when oft at evening's close
> Up yonder hill the village murmur rose.
> There, as I pass'd with careless steps and slow,
> The mingling notes came soften'd from below:
> The swain responsive as the milkmaid sung;
> The sober herd that lowed to meet their young;
> The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool;
> The playful children just let loose from school;
> The watch-dog's voice that bayed the whispering wind,
> And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind:
> These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,
> And filled each pause the nightingale had made.

4. Study the extract from "The Winter Walk at Noon" (pp. 102–103), observing the descriptive words and phrases which the poet has employed. Note especially the expressions which would not be used in a merely explanatory description. Study carefully the words which you are not accustomed to use in speaking or writing, and be ready to use them accurately in sentences of your own.

Which expressions indicate the poet's interpretation of the scene, and show his mood?

The Beginning of a Description (p. 106)

1. Read over the descriptive selections in this book with special reference to the introduction. How does each description begin?

2. Write an appropriate introduction — a sentence or a paragraph — for each theme named in the following list: — (1) When the Day's Work is Done; (2) The Village Playground; (3) Beaver Brook in Winter; (4) An Abandoned Farm; (5) The Yacht Race; (6) When School Begins; (7) The First Snowfall; (8) The Apple Harvest; (9) Afternoon Tea; (10) Mary's Aunt Maria.

Description of a Place (p. 107)

1. Write a description, using the following subject and plan: — My grandfather's house, (1) from without, — description of the surroundings and the house itself; (2) from within, — the rooms with their furnishings, and the inmates.

2. Imagine yourself as living in Louisiana. You visit a friend in New England at Christmas. Write to your friends at home, describing your visit.

3. Reverse the conditions in the preceding exercise, and write from New Orleans.

4. Select from "The Lady of the Lake" some good description of a place or scene. Read the description to the class, pointing out the features which illustrate the principles of descriptive writing.

5. Analyze some short description of a place, making an outline as you read. Prepare a subject for each paragraph. Enumerate the details in each. Then rewrite the description from your outline.

6. Write a description of a field or pasture with which you are familiar. Imagine that you are standing by the pasture bars and looking at the scene which you describe. Do not change your point of view during the description.

7. Observe some vacant lot. Note its situation, its surroundings; the shrubs, flowers, weeds, or accumulated deposits; the children at play. Write a composition upon "The Geography of a Vacant Lot," embodying your observations.

8. Describe some house as clearly as you can. Read your description to the class, asking the students to draw the house from your description. Compare the drawings, and see whether they represent what you actually described.

9. You are spending a year on a farm. Give an account of a day's work in summer and in winter, describing the places in which the work goes on.

10. Describe your town in the manner suggested in Dr. Arnold's letter (p. 107).

The Point of View in Description (p. 108)

1. A hungry newsboy stands in front of a restaurant, looking in at the meats and pastry displayed in the window, at the counters heaped with food, and the tables surrounded by persons eating dinner.

a. Describe the scene in the newsboy's words, using the first person and the present tense.

b. A benevolent woman, standing within and holding her own boy by the hand, looks out, sees the newsboy, recognizes his need, invites him in, provides him with a good dinner, and leaves him enjoying it. Tell the story as she recited it to her children in the evening, describing the newsboy, and expressing her own feeling.

c. Tell the story as a friend of the woman's, looking on, might have told it afterward. Incidentally, describe the newsboy's friend.

2. After writing the preceding exercises, criticise your work. In particular, observe whether you have maintained the speaker's point of view. Do not introduce into your description or narration anything which could not have been seen by the speaker. Include action or movement in your description.

3. Describe the appearance of the schoolyard just before school opens: — (*a*) as if you were the teacher, looking down from an upper window; (*b*) as if you were a child in the lines which are forming.

4. Find in history some description of a battlefield. Change it, to make it appear that the description is written by one

who took part in the engagement. You will of course use the first person.

5. Imagine yourself as returning from a long voyage and entering the harbor (New York, Boston, or San Francisco). Describe the shore as it appears, (*a*) when first seen; (*b*) on nearer approach; and (*c*) as you are about to land.

6. Describe the successive views of the country which appear to you as you climb a hill near your home.

7. Describe the country in your neighborhood as it appears from a train.

8. Describe the City Hall or the Town House from without; from within.

Time in Description (p. 112)

1. Write a description of the Valley of the Floss (p. 99) as you imagine it would look (1) on a hot day in July; (2) on a bright clear day in January, with snow on the ground.

2. Describe your own neighborhood on a cloudy day in February; on a calm, clear morning in July.

3. Rewrite the description which you prepared in Exercise 10 (p. 138), putting in such details of weather, sky, and air as may give your reader a good idea of the place in summer; in winter.

4. Describe a scene at a county fair in fine weather.

5. Describe the same scene during a sudden shower.

6. Describe a holiday procession in a city on a bright day in early summer. Do not forget the spectators.

7. Describe the same scene during a sudden thunderstorm.

8. Rain in summer.

   a. Describe the appearance of the country before the rain.

   b. Indications of the coming shower.

   c. The shower itself.

   d. The effect of the rain.

9. Write a description of a public square in Havana or Manila in the rainy season; in the dry season.

10. Describe a city street on a dusty day in March, with the east wind blowing.

11. Describe a storm on Lake Michigan. Imagine yourself on the lake in a small sailboat with three companions. Define the time carefully.

12. Describe a storm on the coast of Maine, as in No. 11; in Chesapeake Bay; in the Gulf of Mexico; on the coast of Southern California. Be sure to define the time.

13. Describe a storm in the mountains. Fix the place and the time before you begin.

14. After reading the description of Marseilles in August (p. 113), write a description of that city as you imagine it might appear on a cold, drizzly day in March.

15. Find a piece of description in narration which is clearly defined in time. Show whether the time is fixed, as in the August day in Marseilles (p. 113), or changing, as in the extract from Weyman (p. 112).

16. Write a description of a moving object, seen at various distances: — as an approaching steamship, whose coming is watched from the shore; or a procession, heard before it appears; or a hand-organ, followed by an increasing group of children.

Description of Persons (p. 115)

1. Study Franklin's description of himself (pp. 12–13). Note the details that help to produce the desired impression on the imagination of the reader.

2. Bring a photograph of some person to the class, and try to write a description that will make the other pupils recognize it. Then show them the photograph and see if they would recognize it from your description.

3. Find a description of a person, in some story or historical work that you have read. Observe the items included in the description. Do they refer to appearance or to character?

4. Read the description of Miss Trotwood in "David Copperfield"; of Uriah Heep; of Traddles. Comment upon the descriptions.

5. Read "The Last Leaf," by Holmes. Observe and report the personal description in the poem.

6. Write a description of a lost child for insertion in a local newspaper.

7. Describe a scene which you have observed in a street car. Indicate in the description the appearance and characteristics of the passengers mentioned.

8. Write an account of a day in a hay field. Include a description of the field when the men are at work, and describe their appearance.

Character in Descriptions (p. 118)

1. Study the description of Scrooge in Dickens's "Christmas Carol." Indicate (*a*) the details which bring out his character; (*b*) those which indicate appearance only and which might have been included in a picture; (*c*) those which indicate habit or action.

2. Make a list of ten descriptive words which suggest or interpret character.

3. Bring to the class three good descriptions of persons. Pick out (*a*) the words or phrases that describe features; (*b*) those that describe general appearance, manners, and movements; (*c*) those that interpret or express character.

Omit (*a*) and read the description aloud. Do the same with (*b*) and (*c*). Note the loss in each case.

4. Describe a character in some book you have read recently. Include quotations which throw light upon the character.

5. Write an account of a day spent in taking care of a fretful and mischievous child. In the course of your story, describe the child and outline his character.

6. "What sort of person is your friend Brown?" asks your neighbor. Reply by telling an incident which indicates the character of your friend.

7. Describe the applewoman at the corner, or the popcorn man.

8. Peggy is a country girl who is making her first visit to the city. With her aunt and uncle she hears a fine concert for the first time. Give an account of the evening in such a manner as to describe Peggy's character.

9. Study the description of "The Virtuous Woman" in the Bible (Proverbs xxxi). By what means is her character portrayed? Would adjectives serve to express the same ideas?

10. Read Lowell's poem, "My Love," studying it as a description of character. Then describe the character in prose, trying to include the essential elements of the poet's description.

11. How is the character of Miss Matty brought out in "Cranford"? Give other illustrations of description of personal appearance and characteristic behavior from "Cranford."

12. Study this description from Browning. By what means is the character presented to the reader?

One who never turned his back, but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake.

13. Find or write another description, in which the character of a person is portrayed by showing what he did.

Comparison and Contrast in Description (pp. 120–123)

1. Of two brothers, one is rich, the other poor. Contrast their homes.

2. Contrast two imaginary scenes, the one reposeful, the other turbulent.

3. Compare Brutus and Cassius.

4. Study this description carefully, observing the comparison:

It is with men as with trees: if you lop off their finest branches, into which they were pouring their young life-juice, the wounds will be healed over with some rough boss, some odd excrescence; and what might have been a grand tree expanding into liberal shade, is but a whimsical misshapen trunk. Many an irritating fault, many an unlovely oddity, has come of a hard sorrow, which has crushed and maimed the nature just when it was expanding into plenteous beauty; and the trivial erring life which we visit with our harsh blame, may be but as the unsteady motion of a man whose best limb is withered. — George Eliot.

State the truth of the selection in plain language, without attempting a comparison.

Present each description by itself, pointing out its beauties of thought and expression; then compare the two, showing the parallel.

Miscellaneous Exercises

Study the following outlines; then rewrite each description from memory, using the outline as a guide. Before writing, make notes of the subordinate details in each paragraph, and arrange them so as to emphasize the **point** of each description.

1. An Iceberg (pp. 91–92)

a. Introduction. — The damp chilly air and falling temperature indicate ice near us. The cook announces the fine sight.

b. The iceberg. — (1) Its appearance, — shape, contour, size; the surrounding water. (2) Sublimity of the sight, — size of the berg, motion, dashing waves, thundering sound; our fear of its nearer approach.

c. The night; disappearance of the iceberg.

2. The Old Boat (pp. 92–94)

a. The way to the house.

b. The old boat, from without.

c. The old boat, from within.

3. Dinah Morris (pp. 118–119)

a. Dinah's manner and general appearance as she entered, indicating simplicity, unconsciousness, absence of affectation.

b. Her attitude toward those about her.

c. Her face (picture, impression).

d. Effect upon those who saw her.

4. Study Miss Mitford's description of "The Country in Winter" (p. 94). Note how she contrives to take the reader with her from place to place, so that he seems to see the landscape with his own eyes rather than the writer's. By what means does she secure this effect?

Write the description in the first person singular, substituting the past tense for the present, and note the effect.

5. Miss Mitford is describing an English scene. Does the description show this? How does the country which Miss Mitford describes differ from your neighborhood?

What phrases do you find in the description which do not occur in your own colloquial English?

Study the comparisons in the description. Do they add to its beauty and effectiveness?

What characteristics of the writer does the description reveal?

6. Take a walk to the nearest bit of country. Then write a description of your walk, after the manner of Miss Mitford. Imagine that you have a child with you, to whom you speak of the things which attract your attention and interest you.

7. Study "An August Day in Marseilles."

What is the effect of the introductory sentence?

Try to express in a fitting sentence or phrase the substance of the next paragraph. By what device does the author make you realize the intensity of the heat on this day?

What does the next paragraph add to the description? How is the effect produced?

Show how the next paragraph extends the view, intensifies the feeling of heat, and introduces specific details.

Would the last sentence of this paragraph have been equally effective at the beginning? Give your reasons.

Point out a number of words or phrases which impart vividness to the description.

Note the repetition of *stare* in the description. Do not try to imitate this. Such devices are best left to the great writers, who know how to employ them.

8. Read and study Byron's description of night on the Gulf of Corinth ("The Siege of Corinth," lines 242–283), as an example of poetical description. Read the verses several times to feel their beauty of expression and the complete fitness of word and phrase. Be sure that you understand every word and allusion. Then analyze the verses to discover the means which the poet has employed in writing the description.

1. Study the descriptive words and phrases. Note their arrangement and their sound, as well as their meaning.
2. What fixes the time of the scene?
3. What lines furnish the setting?
4. How is the calmness of the night made evident?
5. How is the thought led from the quietness of sky and sea to the hosts encamped on the land?
6. What feeling is introduced by the Muezzin's call?
7. How do lines 274–283 change the setting?

CHAPTER IV

EXPOSITION

Pages 145–157 contain five specimens of **exposition,** to which we shall have occasion to refer from time to time in our study of this form of discourse.

The first specimen, "The Smudge," by Dr. Van Dyke, is from an entertaining book of out-of-door life. It explains a process, — not formally, but in a style of pleasant humor.

The second, Sir George Grey's "Australian Kangaroo Hunt," also explains how something is done. It adopts the narrative form and is full of action.

The third, Professor Davis's account of "The Influence of Climate on Manners and Customs," is a good example of simple and interesting scientific exposition, — exact and methodical, but with a minimum of technicality.

The fourth and fifth, Lubbock's "Fertilization of Plants" and Professor Goss's "Locomotive," are somewhat more technical, and illustrate the use of diagrams.

I. THE SMUDGE[1]

By Henry Van Dyke

But enough of the cooking-fire. Let us turn now to the subject of the smudge, known in Lower Canada as *la boucana.* The smudge owes its existence to the pungent mosquito, the sanguinary black-fly, and the peppery midge, — *le maringouin, la moustique, et le brûlot.* To what it owes its English name I do not know; but its French name means simply a thick, nauseating, intolerable smoke.

[1] From "Fisherman's Luck" (by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons).

The smudge is called into being for the express purpose of creating a smoke of this kind, which is as disagreeable to the mosquito, and black-fly, and the midge, as it is to the man whom they are devouring. But the man survives the smoke, while the insects succumb to it, being destroyed or driven away. Therefore the smudge, dark and bitter in itself, frequently becomes, like adversity, sweet in its uses. It must be regarded as a form of fire with which man has made friends under the pressure of a cruel necessity.

It would seem as if it ought to be the simplest affair in the world to light up a smudge. And so it is — if you are not trying.

An attempt to produce almost any other kind of fire will bring forth smoke abundantly. But when you deliberately undertake to create a smudge, flames break from the wettest timber, and green moss blazes with a furious heat. You hastily gather handfuls of seemingly incombustible material and throw it on the fire, but the conflagration increases. Grass and green leaves hesitate for an instant and then flash up like tinder. The more you put on, the more your smudge rebels against its proper task of smudging. It makes a pleasant warmth, to encourage the black-flies; and bright light to attract and cheer the mosquitoes. Your effort is a brilliant failure.

The proper way to make a smudge is this. Begin with a very little, lowly fire. Let it be bright but not ambitious. Don't try to make a smoke yet.

Then gather a good supply of stuff which seems likely to suppress fire without smothering it. Moss of a certain kind will do, but not the soft, feathery moss that grows so deep among the spruce-trees. Half-decayed wood is good; spongy, moist, unpleasant stuff, a vegetable wet blanket. The bark of dead evergreen trees, hemlock, spruce, or balsam, is better still. Gather a plentiful store of it. But don't try to make a smoke yet.

Let your fire burn a while longer; cheer it up a little. Get some clear, resolute, unquenchable coals aglow in the heart of it. Don't try to make a smoke yet.

Now pile on your smouldering fuel. Fan it with your hat. Kneel down and blow it, and in ten minutes you will have a smoke that will make you wish you had never been born.

That is a proper way to make a smudge. But the easiest way is to ask your guide to make it for you.

II. AN AUSTRALIAN KANGAROO HUNT[1]

By Sir George Grey

The moment an Australian savage commences his day's hunting, his whole manner and appearance undergo a wondrous change. His eyes, before heavy and listless, brighten up, and are never for a moment fixed upon one object; his gait and movements, which were indolent and slow, become quick and restless, yet noiseless; he moves along with a rapid, stealthy pace, his glance roving from side to side in a vigilant uneasy manner, arising from his eagerness to detect signs of game, and his fears of hidden foes. The earth, the water, the trees, the skies, each are in turn subjected to a rigid scrutiny, and from the most insignificant circumstances he deduces omens. His head is held erect, and his progress is uncertain. In a moment his pace is checked; he stands in precisely the position of motion as if suddenly transfixed. Nothing about him stirs but his eyes; they glance uneasily from side to side, whilst the head and every muscle seem immovable; but the white eyeballs may be seen in rapid motion, whilst all his faculties are concentrated, and his whole soul is absorbed in the senses of sight and hearing. His wives, who are at some distance behind him, the moment they see him assume this attitude, fall to the ground as if they had been shot; their children cower by them, and their little faces express an earnestness and anxiousness which is far beyond their years. At length a suppressed whistle is given by one of the women, which denotes that she sees a kangaroo near her husband — all is again silence, and quietude; and an unpractised European would ride within a few yards of the group, and not perceive a living thing.

Looking about a hundred yards to the right of the native, you will see a kangaroo erect upon its hind legs, and supported by its tail. It is reared to its utmost height, so that its head is between five and six feet above the ground. Its short fore paws hang by its side; its ears are pointed; it is listening as carefully as the native, and you see a little head appearing out from its pouch, to enquire what has alarmed its mother. But the native moves not; you cannot tell whether it is a human being or the charred trunk of a burnt tree which is before you, and for several minutes the

[1] From "Travels in Western and Northwestern Australia."

whole group preserve their relative position. At length the kangaroo becomes reassured, drops upon its fore paws, gives an awkward leap or two, and goes on feeding, — the little inhabitant of its pouch stretching its head farther out, tasting the grass its mother is eating, and evidently debating whether or not it is safe to venture out of its resting place.

Meantime the native moves not until the kangaroo, having two or three times resumed the attitude of listening, and having like a monkey scratched its side with its fore paw, at length once more abandons itself in perfect security to its feed, and playfully smells and rubs its little one. Now the watchful savage, keeping his body unmoved, fixes the spear first in the throwing-stick, and then raises his arms in the attitude of throwing, from which they are never again moved until the kangaroo dies or runs away. His spear being properly secured, he advances slowly and stealthily towards his prey, no part moving but his legs. Whenever the kangaroo looks round, he stands motionless in the position he is in when it first raises its head, until the animal, again assured of its safety, gives a skip or two and goes on feeding. Again the native advances, and this scene is repeated many times, until the whistling spear penetrates the devoted animal. Then the wood rings with shouts ; women and children all join pell-mell in the chase. The kangaroo, weak from loss of blood, and embarrassed by the long spear which catches in the brushwood as it flies, at length turns on its pursuers, and, to secure its rear, places its back against a tree, preparing at the same time to rend open the breast and entrails of its pursuer, by seizing him in its fore paws, and kicking with its hind legs and claws ; but the wily native keeps clear of so murderous an embrace, and from the distance of a few yards throws spears into its breast, until the exhausted animal falls, and is then soon despatched ; when, with the assistance of his wives, he takes its fore legs over his left shoulder, and totters with his burden to some convenient resting place, where they can enjoy their meal.

III. THE INFLUENCE OF CLIMATE ON MANNERS AND CUSTOMS[1]

By W. M. Davis

The customs of mankind are influenced in many ways by climate. Some of the climatic influences are direct, as with regard to clothing and shelter. Some influences are indirect, as with regard to food supply, which in turn is affected by the distribution of plants and animals. Climatic influences are less apparent on civilized people than on savage tribes; for the former have developed world-wide commerce, and thus gather supplies from all parts of the earth; while the latter know little or nothing of regions away from their own home. Two examples are given in the following paragraphs.

The equatorial belt of Africa is in large part a densely forested wilderness, because of its plentiful rainfall. Tall trees spread their branches aloft, shading the ground all the year with their heavy foliage. Vines and creepers climb the trees and hang from bough to bough in great festoons, and the shady and damp ground is covered with a thick growth of bushes with stems and branches so closely interlaced that it is almost impossible to make one's way through them without cutting a passage. Even the wild animals of the forest go and come by paths that they keep open by frequent passing. Objects near at hand are hidden from sight; the explorer cannot tell what is ahead of him in the gloom of the forest until he is close upon it. Vegetation is here so luxuriant that it is a burden upon the people who live amid its abundant growth.

Some of the savages of this great forest are Dwarfs, from three to four and a half feet in height. They wear little clothing, for the air about them is always warm. They do not try to make clearings and to cultivate fields, but search out the more open parts of the forest and build their villages where the undergrowth is least dense. They have some trade with other tribes, but live chiefly by hunting wild game, which is plentiful. Although entirely ignorant of many simple arts practised by people of more open countries, the Dwarfs are expert in all the ways of

[1] From "Elementary Physical Geography" (Boston, Ginn & Company).

forest life. They can travel quickly through the woods, knowing all the paths and open places. They protect their villages from the attack of neighboring tribes by planting sharpened stakes in the paths of approach. They dig pitfalls in the narrow forest paths, covering them with sticks and leaves, and in this way capture even the larger wild animals. They prepare a poison from certain plants and tip their spears and arrows with it. In spite of their small size, they are formidable enemies to invaders of their forest home.

The desolate shores of Greenland present conditions of an entirely different kind. Extreme cold prevails there during the long dark winter, and most of the land is covered all the year round with ice and snow, — a vast cold desert. A narrow belt along the coast is free from snow in summer, and here live a few tribes of Eskimos; but the ground is so barren that they get little support from it. The only treelike plants are of stunted growth, seldom over two or three feet high. The herbage consists chiefly of mosses and lichens, which grow for a time in summer when the frozen ground is thawed for a few inches below the surface. A small supply of wood comes from the trunks of trees that are occasionally drifted by ocean currents to the Arctic shores from warmer regions; but there is so little of it that many articles which might be made of wood elsewhere are here made from the bones of sea animals.

The Eskimos wear heavy fur clothing. They travel in sleds drawn by dogs over the snow-covered land or the frozen sea. They make slender canoes, called kayaks, which they paddle very skilfully when hunting seals and walruses. Until visited by Europeans and Americans, the Eskimos were as ignorant of the rest of the world as were the African Dwarfs; yet so well have they learned to take every advantage of their frigid surroundings that they survive where men from a more civilized nation, unused to living in so barren a region, might perish.

These brief accounts of the Dwarfs and the Eskimos show very clearly that, as a rule, the climate and the other local features of the regions in which men live exercise a strong control over their manner of living. The Eskimos know nothing of forests, thickets, and pitfalls. The Dwarfs know nothing of snow and ice, sleds, kayaks, and harpoons. But each of these groups of people has become well practised in certain habits and customs

that enable them to secure food, shelter, and reasonable safety of life; and these habits and customs are closely related to the surroundings in which they have been acquired.

IV. THE FERTILIZATION OF PLANTS [1]

By Sir John Lubbock

A regular flower, such, for instance, as a geranium or a pink, consists of four or more whorls of leaves, more or less modified: (1) the lowest whorl is the calyx, and the separate leaves of which it is composed, which, however, are sometimes united into a tube, are called sepals; (2) a second whorl, the corollæ, consisting of colored leaves called petals, which, however, like those of the calyx, are often united into a tube; (3) one or more stamens, consisting of a stalk or filament, and a head or anther, in which the pollen is produced; and (4) a pistil, which is situated in the centre of the flower, and at the base of which is the ovary, containing one or more seeds.

Almost all large flowers are brightly colored, many produce honey, and many are sweet-scented.

What, then, is the use and purpose of this complex organization?

It is, I think, well established that the main object of the color, scent, and honey of flowers is to attract insects, which are of use to the plant in carrying the pollen from flower to flower.

In many species the pollen is, and no doubt it originally was in all, carried by the air. In these cases the chance against any given grain of pollen reaching the pistil of another flower of the same species is of course very great, and the quantity of pollen required is therefore immense.

In species where the pollen is wind-borne, as in most of our trees—firs, oaks, beech, ash, elm, etc., and many herbaceous plants, the flowers are as a rule small and inconspicuous, greenish, and without either scent or honey. Moreover, they generally flower early, so that the pollen may not be intercepted by the leaves, but may have a better chance of reaching another flower. And they produce an immense quantity of pollen, as otherwise there would be little chance that any would reach the female flower. Every one must have noticed the clouds of pollen produced by the

[1] From "The Beauties of Nature." Copyright, 1892, by Macmillan & Co.

Scotch fir. When, on the contrary, the pollen is carried by insects, the quantity necessary is greatly reduced. Still it has been calculated that a peony flower produces between 3,000,000 and 4,000,000 pollen grains; in the dandelion, which is more specialized, the number is reduced to about 250,000; while in such a flower as the dead-nettle it is still smaller.

The honey attracts the insects; while the scent and color help them to find the flowers, the scent being especially useful at night, which is perhaps the reason why evening flowers are so sweet.

It is to insects, then, that flowers owe their beauty, scent, and sweetness. Just as gardeners, by continual selection, have added so much to the beauty of our gardens, so to the unconscious action of insects is due the beauty, scent, and sweetness of the flowers of our woods and fields.

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

Let us now apply these views to a few common flowers. Take, for instance, the white dead-nettle.

The corolla of this beautiful and familiar flower consists of a narrow tube, somewhat expanded at the upper end (Fig. 1), where the lower lobe forms a platform, on each side of which is a small projecting tooth (Fig. 2, *m*). The upper portion of the corolla is an arched hood (*co*), under which lie four anthers (*a a*), in pairs, while between them, and projecting somewhat downwards, is the pointed pistil (*st*); the tube at the lower part contains honey, and above the honey is a row of hairs running round the tube.

Now, why has the flower this peculiar form? What regulates the length of the tube? What is the use of the arch? What lesson do the little teeth teach us? What advantage is the honey to the flower? Of what use is the fringe of hairs? Why does the stigma project beyond the anthers? Why is the corolla white, while the rest of the plant is green?

The honey of course serves to attract the humble-bees by which the flower is fertilized, and to which it is especially adapted; the

white color makes the flower more conspicuous; the lower lip forms the stage on which the bees may alight; the length of the tube is adapted to that of their proboscis; it narrowness and the fringe of fine hairs exclude small insects which might rob the flower of its honey without performing any service in return; the arched upper lip protects the stamens and pistil, and prevents rain-drops from choking up the tube and washing away the honey. The little teeth are, I believe, of no use to the flower in its present condition; they are the last relics of lobes once much larger, and still remaining so in some allied species, but which in the dead-nettle, being no longer of any use, are gradually disappearing. The height of the arch has reference to the size of the bee,

FIG. 3

FIG. 4

FIG. 5

being just so much above the alighting stage that the bee, while sucking the honey, rubs its back against the hood and thus comes in contact first with the stigma and then with the anthers, the pollen-grains from which adhere to the hairs on the bee's back, and are thus carried off to the next flower which the bee visits, when some of them are then licked off by the viscid tip of the stigma.

In the salvias, the common blue salvia of our gardens, for instance, — a plant allied to the dead-nettle, — the flower (Fig. 3) is constructed on the same plan, but the arch is much larger, so that the back of the bee does not nearly reach it. The stamens, however, have undergone a remarkable modification. Two of them have become small and functionless. In the other two the anthers or cells producing the pollen, which in most flowers form

together a round knob or head at the top of the stamen, are separated by a long arm, which plays on the top of the stamen as on a hinge. Of these two arms one hangs down into the tube, closing the passage, while the other lies under the arched upper lip. When the bee pushes its proboscis down the tube (Fig. 5), it presses the lower arm to one side, and the upper arm consequently descends, tapping the bee on the back, and dusting it with pollen. When the flower is a little older, the pistil (Fig. 3, *p*) has elongated so that the stigma (Fig. 4, *st*) touches the back of the bee and carries off some of the pollen. This sounds a little complicated, but is clear enough if we take a twig or stalk of grass and push it down the tube, when one arm of each of the two larger stamens will at once make its appearance. It is one of the most beautiful pieces of plant mechanism which I know.

V. THE LOCOMOTIVE[1]

By W. F. M. Goss

The boiler and engine of a locomotive are similar in their general character to the boiler and engine of a stationary power-plant. Each exists for the purpose of converting into work the potential energy of fuel. There are differences in the details of mechanism, and in the conditions under which work is performed, but the principles underlying action are the same.

As compared with the locomotive, the stationary plant has an advantage in being fixed in its position. It may be so arranged that all its parts are accessible to attendants, who in doing their work may pass freely from one element to another, and any detail which is better when made large can be given such dimensions as will ensure its efficient and otherwise satisfactory performance. In many cases there are no limiting dimensions; the plant may be built as long and as wide and as high as may be desired. It is possible, therefore, so to construct the engines, boilers, and accessory apparatus of a stationary plant, as to secure any desired degree of efficiency, within limits which are prescribed by the state of the art. If the pulsating sound of escaping steam is objectionable,

[1] Slightly simplified (by permission) from "Locomotive Sparks" (New York, John Wiley & Sons, 1902).

it may be entirely eliminated by the application of a suitable exhaust-head or muffler. If the presence of a cloud of exhaust-steam is annoying, it may be entirely suppressed by the use of a condenser. If smoke emerging from the top of the stack becomes a nuisance, it may be made to disappear by the use of down-draft furnaces, or by the application of some other form of so-called smoke-consumer. If economy in the use of fuel is an important consideration, small and overworked boilers may give way to others which provide a more liberal allowance of heating-surface. The degree of perfection attained in any or all of these particulars is in fact a matter which is entirely within the choice of the designer, subject only to such limitations of cost as may be imposed by business considerations.

In passing from stationary power-plants to moving power-plants in the form of locomotives, the designer gives up his freedom of choice with reference to many matters of detail, and finds himself confronted with the necessity of having his apparatus conform to certain general conditions. The work which his boiler and engine are to do must be made to appear in the motion of the plant itself and its attached train. Hence the heat-energy of the fuel must be transformed into work by as direct a process as is practicable.

The stationary plant runs at a fixed speed and usually at a fairly constant load: the locomotive must run at all speeds; it must climb hills, pulling slowly and hard, and it must roll rapidly into valleys, holding back a train which would push it on at still higher speeds.

Important elements must be adapted one to another, and there must be an entire omission of many details which in good practice are regarded as necessary to the economical working of a stationary plant. The moving parts of a stationary engine work in a substantial frame, which in turn is bolted to a massive foundation, while the frame of a locomotive is suspended by springs from axles carried by wheels which are supported by a yielding and uneven track. The action of the stationary engine can be one of precision, and delicate and precise devices may be embodied in its mechanism which are not at all admissible in the less rigid structure of the locomotive. The stationary engine is protected from the weather and from dust, while the locomotive must give no trouble if worked in rain or snow, or in clouds of dust.

The designer of a locomotive, moreover, is forced to recognize that the machine with which he is concerned constitutes but one of many elements which go to make up the material property of a railroad. The width between the wheels is prescribed by the gage of the track, and the length of the wheel-base by the curvature of track, the length of turn-tables, and the dimensions of other facilities at the terminals of the road. The extreme width and height of the machine are also limited, for the locomotive must pass by station-platforms, underneath bridges, and through tunnels.

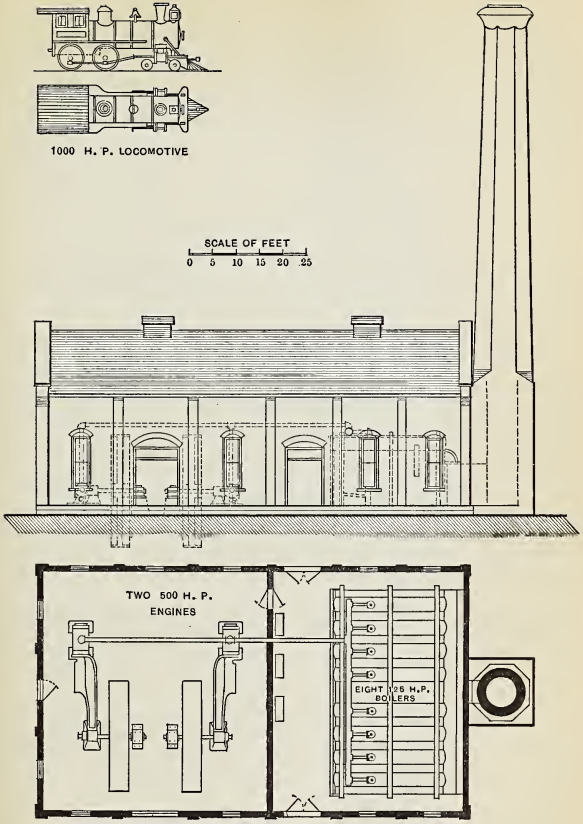
Despite such limiting conditions as these, the locomotive designer has for many years been under the necessity of producing locomotives which will carry greater loads and move at higher speeds than those which have preceded them. Locomotives which could carry twenty cars have given way to newer and larger machines which are capable of carrying forty cars, and trains which used to be pulled at a speed of twenty-five miles an hour must now be carried at fifty miles an hour.

With restraining conditions fixing limits which are absolute, and acting under the influence of a growing demand for increased power, the locomotive designer has been forced to regard economy in fuel as a matter of secondary importance. The same is true of the problems of reducing noise and abating smoke. He knows that smoke from a locomotive can be suppressed, but he also knows that, in accomplishing this, the firing will be interfered with and the power of the locomotive will be reduced. There is, in fact, no serious defect in the working of the modern locomotive that is not appreciated by the designer. He allows defects to exist because all efforts to overcome them appear to work to the disadvantage of more important characteristics of his machine.

The achievements of the locomotive designer, in the face of all these difficulties, are illustrated by the figure on page 157, which shows two power-plants, each of a thousand horse-power. Both are drawn to the same scale, so that a comparison discloses their relative dimensions.

The drawings tell their own story. Those of the stationary plant cover an area of paper many times greater than that covered by the drawings of the locomotive, and yet the power-capabilities of the two plants are the same. Evidently a construction that enables the power of the smaller apparatus to equal that of the larger must be unusually compact and effective.

1000 H. P. LOCOMOTIVE



IMPORTANCE OF EXPOSITION

Exposition (that is, **explanation**)[1] is the commonest form of discourse. One can hardly answer a question that begins with *why* or *how* without explaining. We compose an exposition whenever we direct a stranger to the post office, or tell a friend how to play a game. A teacher expounds when he gives instruction; a pupil, when he recites. Most business letters are to some degree expository. Skill in exposition, then, — or, in other words, the ability to explain a subject **clearly, accurately,** and **with effectiveness,** — is of the highest importance in every department of practical affairs.

Training in exposition is not confined to the writing of essays. Every recitation — whether in history, or literature, or science — gives an opportunity for such training. Whenever you recite, it is your business to explain the subject in hand as well as you can. You should keep this object in mind when you study. Do not merely learn your lesson by rote, but gather knowledge to use in an exposition of your own which shall be as good as that in the text-book, or better. Do not hesitate to improve on the book.

The following directions for studying will be found useful, not only as practice in exposition, but as a means of learning your lessons well and remembering them.

First read the lesson through. Then go back and note down the more important topics on a sheet of paper. Study each topic in order, with the paper before you. Then, still referring to the paper, see if you can give a clear and accurate explanation of

[1] *Exposition* and *explanation* are synonymous terms and practically interchangeable. *Exposition* (from the Latin *expositio*, "a setting forth") has in English a cognate verb to *expound* (from the Latin *expono*), but this is a somewhat formal word, and to *explain* is the commoner term.

each of the topics. There is no better way of making sure that you really know the lesson.

When you recite, and are asked to explain some portion of the lesson, the teacher's question will give you your main topic. Start from that, then, and try to arrange what you say as if you were constructing a paragraph. Let your first sentence state what you are going to do; then develop the subject carefully as you go along, and try to end with a sentence that shall sum up what you have said.

ESSENTIALS OF EXPOSITION

The first requisite for a good exposition is the **selection of a definite and manageable subject.** Everything that has been said about titles on pages 7 and 8 applies with peculiar force to exposition. A vague and general subject is almost sure to result in a hazy and rambling treatment. For brief compositions, limited subjects should be chosen. "Physics" is not so good a subject as "The Air-Pump"; "Ornithology," as "The Habits of the Chimney-Swallow"; "Local Self-Government," as "Our Town-Meeting" or "The City Council"; "New York under Dutch Rule," as "Peter Stuyvesant"; "Shipbuilding," as "How to Rig a Catboat." The larger subjects, to be sure, are perfectly proper for general treatises by competent specialists; but they are too extensive for brief themes by students who are learning to write.

Whatever the subject, an exposition should include nothing that is not **directly to the point.** Digressions, side-remarks, and everything that does not bear upon the matter to be explained, should be carefully avoided. In other words, an exposition should observe the principle of **unity,** — it should be a complete and consistent whole. A writer who wanders away from the subject, — who does not stick to his text, — can never explain anything satisfactorily.

An exposition should also be **coherent**, — that is, it should "hang together." Its parts should not only be clearly related to the subject, but they should stand in a manifest relation to each other. **Coherence** is largely a matter of arrangement. If the several facts that have to be mentioned are properly grouped and classified in the writer's mind, their relations are pretty sure to come out distinctly in his essay. Coherence is further ensured by care in making **transitions** (see p. 177).

Both **unity and coherence** are well illustrated, in a simple type of exposition, by Professor Davis's "Influence of Climate on Manners and Customs" (p. 149).

Every fact mentioned bears directly upon the subject, and the arrangement brings out the relations of the facts beyond the possibility of mistake. First, the subject is announced, and the general principle is distinctly stated. Then the Dwarfs and the Eskimos are discussed, as contrasted illustrations of the principle. Finally, the concluding paragraph sums up what has been said, and thus leaves the reader with a clear understanding of the subject that has been explained.

Five brief specimens of **exposition**, each consisting of a single paragraph, will now be given as illustrations. In the first, on "Forms of Government," we have exposition by definition. In the second, the meaning of the term "Behavior" is brought out by showing the varied applications of the word. In the third, on "Public Drinking Cups," a principle is laid down and reasons for it are given. In the fourth, on "The Fertility of the Blue-Grass Country," the cause is stated and its effects are then explained. In the fifth, on "The Human Hand," we have an instance of expository description.[1]

[1] On the difference between literary and expository description see pp. 96–97.

1. There are three great divisions under which governments, where they are of simple and unmixed form, may be classed, according to the hands in which the supreme power is lodged. It may be vested in a single person, or it may be vested in a particular class different from the bulk of the community, or it may be vested in the community at large. In the first case the government is called a *Monarchy*, from the Greek words signifying the rule of a single person ; *Despotism* (also from the Greek word for a master) means the absolute and uncontrolled power of one master ; but in ordinary language the word denotes rather the abuse of Monarchy than a separate form of it. In the second case it is called an *Aristocracy*, from the Greek word signifying the power or prevalence of the best, or highest classes — literally the best in respect of virtue, but practically the uppermost in point of authority. Where but a few of this class — a select number or a subordinate body — have obtained the exclusive control, it is termed an *Oligarchy*, that is to say, the government of a few ; but this is rather the abuse of the Aristocratic form than a separate kind of government, as Despotism is the abuse of the Monarchical form. In the third case it is called a *Democracy*, from the Greek word signifying the power or prevalence of the people ; and sometimes a *Republic*, from the Latin words meaning the Commonwealth or people's interest, although the term Republic includes also Aristocracies. — BROUGHAM.[1]

2. We commonly use the word "behavior" with a wide range of meaning. We speak of the behavior of troops in the field, of the prisoner at the bar, of a dandy in a ballroom. But the chemist and the physicist often speak of the behavior of atoms and molecules, or that of a gas under changing conditions of temperature and pressure. The geologist tells us that a glacier behaves in many respects like a river, and discusses how the crust of the earth behaves under the stresses to which it is subjected. Weatherwise people comment on the behavior of the mercury in a barometer as a storm approaches. Instances of a similar usage need not be multiplied. Frequently employed with a moral significance, the word is at least occasionally used in a wider and more comprehensive sense. When Mary, the nurse, returns with the little Miss Smiths from Master Brown's birthday party, she is narrowly questioned as to their behavior ; but meanwhile their father, the professor, has been

[1] From "The British Constitution."

discoursing to his students on the behavior of iron filings in the magnetic fluid ; and his son Jack, of H. M. S. *Blunderer*, entertains his elder sisters with a graphic description of the behavior of a first-class battle-ship in a heavy sea. — Lloyd Morgan.[1]

3. Public drinking cups should be avoided by travellers, theatre-goers, and all persons in parks or other public places. Few sights are more distressing to a sanitarian than to see (on a hot day in a crowded railway car) men, women, and children, of all ages, sorts, and conditions, clean and unclean, sick and well, one after another in rapid succession applying their mouths to the one public drinking cup. If the student will once carefully observe for himself the use to which this cup is put during even a short journey under such conditions, he will realize that every traveller had better carry his own drinking cup, or, in default of this, go thirsty. In some theatres, between the acts, trays containing glasses of water are passed to patrons in their seats. Here also the lips of many persons touch successively the same glasses, and one who is wise will avoid the obvious danger involved in using one of these glasses, which may have become infected. Sanitary drinking fountains in which, by a simple device, the obnoxious common drinking cup is made unnecessary, are now being gradually introduced in parks, schools, and other public places. — Hough and Sedgwick.[2]

4. What gives the great fertility to the blue-grass region is the old limestone rock, laid down in the ancient Silurian areas, which comes to the surface over all this part of the state and makes the soil by its disintegration. The earth surface seems once to have bulged up here like a great bubble, and then have been planed or ground off by the elements. This wearing away process removed all the more recent formations, the coal beds and the conglomerate or other rocks beneath them, and left this ancient limestone exposed. Its continued decay keeps up the fertility of the soil. Wheat and corn and clover are rotated for fifty years upon the same fields without manure, and without any falling off in their productiveness. Where the soil is removed, the rock presents that rough, honeycombed appearance which surfaces do that have been worm-eaten instead of worn. The tooth which has gnawed, and is

[1] From "Animal Behavior."

[2] From "The Human Mechanism" (Boston, Ginn & Company).

still gnawing it, is the carbonic acid carried into the earth by rain-water. Hence, unlike the prairies of the West, the fertility of this soil perpetually renews itself. — BURROUGHS.[1]

5. The external form of the human hand is familiar enough to every one. It consists of a stout wrist followed by a broad palm, formed of flesh, and tendons, and skin, binding together four bones, and dividing into four long and flexible digits, or fingers, each of which bears on the back of its last joint a broad and flattened nail. The longest cleft between any two digits is rather less than half as long as the hand. From the outer side of the base of the palm a stout digit goes off, having only two joints instead of three; so short, that it only reaches to a little beyond the middle of the first joint of the finger next it; and further remarkable by its mobility, in consequence of which it can be directed outwards, almost at a right angle to the rest. This digit is called the *pollex*, or thumb; and, like the others, it bears a flat nail upon the back of its terminal joint. In consequence of the proportions and mobility of the thumb, it is what is termed "opposable"; in other words, its extremity can, with the greatest ease, be brought into contact with the extremities of any of the fingers; a property upon which the possibility of our carrying into effect the conceptions of the mind so largely depends. — HUXLEY.

ARRANGEMENT IN EXPOSITION

The business of exposition is to **make a subject clear** in the mind of the reader or hearer. A familiar example will illustrate this process of clearing up a subject.

Suppose you have to explain baseball to a Frenchman who has never seen the game played and perhaps has never heard of it. You take him out to the field and say nothing. What are his first impressions? He sees a man standing over a flat white stone with a stick in his hand. Another man throws a ball over the stone. A third person, who is not playing, calls out something. The first player throws down his stick and gives up his place to

[1] From "Riverby" (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin & Company).

a fourth man; or else he hits the ball and runs down a path to a place where a fifth man is standing, or perhaps he hits the ball but does not run. And so the game goes on. Of course the Frenchman has no notion of what it is all about. He cannot even guess why the man with the stick sometimes runs down the path and sometimes remains in his place; or why presently the men in one kind of uniform come in from the field and sit down in the shade, only to go out again after a time. When he had watched three or four innings, he would no doubt be utterly confused by all these meaningless actions.

Suppose, now, you attempted to explain the game by taking up each incident as it occurred. You would only make matters worse. To give the Frenchman a clear idea of the subject, you would have to proceed in a very different way. You would begin by telling him how the field is laid out, and how many men there are on a side. Then you would come to the positions and duties of each player. These you would take up in order. First you would explain what the batter has to do; then, perhaps, you would pass on to the pitcher and the catcher; then to the first baseman. Next you might inform him of the different ways in which the batter can get to first base (either by hitting the ball or by a "base on balls") and of what he has to do to "make a run."

In other words, instead of letting the Frenchman try to understand all the acts of the game in the order in which they took place, you would rearrange them entirely. You would bring together incidents that did not occur in the same innings, and would separate other incidents that came close together in the actual game. Thus, when you had finished, the Frenchman would feel that all the confusing facts had been sorted out and so clearly arranged that he could now *see* how the game went.

This is the secret of good **exposition.** Facts and ideas are so rearranged that **related things are brought together in groups,** and one group is considered before the next is taken up.

Turn to Dr. Van Dyke's explanation of "The Smudge" (p. 145), and observe how each step in the process is explained separately. First he tells the purpose of the smudge; then, how

you may fail in your first attempt; then he directs you to start your fire; then he informs you what material will make the thickest smoke; then, in what condition the fire must be; and finally, how to complete the smudge. In carrying out his directions, you might get your moss and rotten bark first, or you might begin by starting the fire. But, in order to explain the process clearly, the facts must be arranged as if the separate parts of the process were quite distinct and always took place in a fixed order.

THE OUTLINE OF AN EXPOSITION

Before you begin to write an exposition you should make an **outline** or **plan,** so as to be sure that the facts which you have collected are well arranged in your own mind.

If the exposition is short, a very simple plan will do. Two or three **topics** (or heads) under which to group your material will probably be sufficient. These you can often frame without putting pen to paper. They may take the form of sentences or may consist in a phrase, or even a single word; but, when they are arranged in a clear and logical order, they give you a plan for your exposition.[1]

If the exposition is longer and more complicated, further preparation is necessary. You will have to **make notes** of the various points, and to **arrange the notes,** before you put your outline together.

Your method of note-taking, and the way in which you set about the arrangement of your material, will naturally vary with the subject, the sources of information at your disposal, and other circumstances.

If you already know a good deal about the subject, so that you have much of your material stored up in your

[1] These suggestions apply also to a short **oral exposition,** such as a recitation in the class.

memory, you can make your preliminary notes on a good-sized sheet of paper. First jot down as many **topics** as you can think of that ought to go into your exposition. Then look the list over, and insert whatever else occurs to you. It may also be well to discuss the list with your family or with a classmate. Be sure to cover everything that one might reasonably ask you about the subject, but do not go into detail too minutely, or you may never get through. In reading over your list of topics, you will probably discover that there are some of them with which you are not very familiar. These, then, are the points to which you should give special attention in collecting further material.

If, on the other hand, you are required to write an exposition on a subject with which you have little or no acquaintance, you may not be able to make such a preliminary list of topics at the outset. In that case, your first business is to gather material, from books or elsewhere. Then, after you have completed your investigations and feel tolerably well-informed in the matter, you can jot down your topics in the way described in the preceding paragraph.

If your exposition is to be pretty long and must include a great many different facts, you may avail yourself of an easy mechanical device to help you in arranging your material. You may note down each of the facts — as you discover it, or as it occurs to your memory — on a separate card or slip of paper.[1] Then you can sort the slips or cards into several piles, thus bringing together those facts which seem to be related. Each of these piles will then represent a single **topic**, and you can draw off your list of topics accordingly.

[1] An old blank-book may be used for note-taking. This can be cut up into slips, each containing a separate note.

The various **topics** which you have noted, should correspond to the **natural divisions of the subject.** For each of these divisions you have now a **group of related facts** to be used in your exposition.

When you have noted down the various topics, you must **arrange them in a proper order** before you begin your exposition. For a good exposition sets forth the facts in the order in which they are most easily comprehended by the reader, and this may be very different from the order in which the writer became acquainted with them.

A scientific investigator, for example, often makes his discoveries in an accidental way. When a particular fact comes under his observation, he makes a memorandum of it; then another fact attracts his attention, and he makes a record of that, — and so on. Until he has finished his experiments, he does not know how the different facts which he has observed are connected with each other. But, after he has mastered the whole subject, he finds that his various observations and discoveries are all related, and that, when properly arranged, they fall into their several places in accordance with their natural relations. He is then in a position to explain (or **expound**) the subject, and, in his **exposition** of it, he arranges the different facts in the order in which they will be most easily understood and learned by his readers, — not in the more or less accidental order in which they first came to his notice.

In collecting your material for an exposition you follow the method of the scientific investigator. To be sure, you do not make experiments, and you can hardly expect to discover new facts; but the various bits of information that you find in the books which you consult, are, it is probable, *new to you*, and the order in which you discover them and note them down is not the order in which you should arrange them in writing your exposition. Like the man of science, you first **make notes**; then you **arrange your notes**; and finally you compose your exposition in accordance with the **plan** that you have decided on.

In arranging your topics to make an outline, you should remember that most of them will belong in the **body of**

the essay. Usually, however, an exposition of any length will require an **introduction,** informing the reader what it is that you undertake to explain. It may also need a **conclusion,** summing up the main points that you have discussed, or otherwise dismissing the subject.[1] Your outline will, then, most commonly have three main divisions, — **introduction, body,** and **conclusion,** — the second of which will be much longer and more complicated than the other two. This gives you the **ground plan,** which you should always keep in mind in sorting and arranging your material.

When you have arranged your several topics in a clear and simple order, in accordance with your best judgment as to their natural succession, the main divisions of your outline are ready. Then **number your topics** and write down for each one a **topic phrase** or **topic sentence** to indicate the contents.

Next you should take up each topic and arrange and rearrange the facts, or **subtopics,** that come under it, until they too stand in a natural and logical order. See that each **subtopic** is expressed in an appropriate sentence or phrase, and mark it with a letter (*a*, *b*, *c*, and so on).

Your **outline** is now complete. It should be in the shape of a table, and should include, in skeleton form, everything that you mean to put into your exposition.

Two outlines are given below as specimens. The first is an outline of Mr. F. T. Bullen's paper "Of Turtle";[2] the second, of Burke's exposition of "The Causes of the Love of Liberty among the Americans."[3]

[1] Other uses of the introduction and conclusion will be mentioned when these parts of the exposition are taken up in detail (see pp. 172 ff., 174 ff.).

[2] From his "Idylls of the Sea" (New York, D. Appleton & Company).

[3] From his "Speech on Conciliation with America."

I

Introduction

I. Discovery of the excellence of turtle as food.
II. Its use as food.
  a. Turtle is a luxury.
  b. It palls upon the palate. (Anecdote in illustration.)

Body of the Exposition

I. Land tortoises.
  a. Habitat and characteristics.
  b. Varieties.
II. Sea turtles.
  a. Distinction from land tortoises.
  b. Habits and characteristics. (Anecdote in illustration.)
  c. Method of capture on shore.
  d. Method of capture at sea.
    1. Common way.
    2. Polynesian way.
    3. Chinese and African way.

Conclusion

Uses of turtle.
  a. For shell.
  b. For food.

II

Introduction

Love of freedom is the predominating feature of the American character.

Body of the Exposition

Causes of this love of liberty.
I. English descent.
  a. The Americans derived from England the idea that freedom was connected with taxing.
  b. Your method of governing them confirmed them in this belief.

II. Their popular form of government.
III. Their religion. (Northern provinces.)
IV. Slavery. (Southern provinces.)
V. Education. (Study of the law.)
VI. Distance from England.

Conclusion

Summing up of the six causes. Strength of the spirit of liberty.

THE KEY-SENTENCE

In drawing up the plan or outline for an exposition you will often be helped by setting down, in a single sentence, the gist or chief principle of the whole subject that you are to explain. This **key-sentence**[1] (as it is often called) will be a kind of summary of the whole explanation or essay. It may take the form of a definition. Thus, if you are about to write an exposition of *football*, your sentence may run as follows: —

Football is a game in which two teams of eleven men each attempt by force and strategy to carry a ball to one end or the other of a field.

Under this general statement you can bring whatever you have to say in your exposition.

So, again, a *steam-engine* has been defined as "an apparatus for doing work by means of heat applied to water." Under that summary statement you can bring anything that is necessary to explain the working of the most complicated engine.

The key-sentence of Professor Davis's exposition (p. 149) is "The customs of mankind are influenced in many ways by climate."

[1] It may be compared to the sentence which summarizes a topic (p. 168), — the **topic sentence**, as it is termed.

The key to Bacon's essay "Of Building" is given in the opening sentence: "Houses are built to live in, and not to look on; therefore let use be preferred before uniformity, except when both may be had." The substance of his essay "Of Judicature" is contained in the sentence: "The office of judges may have a reference unto the parties that sue, unto the advocates that plead, unto clerks and ministers of justice underneath them, and to the sovereign or state above them."

Sir John Lubbock's "Fertilization of Plants" (p. 151) may be summed up in the sentence, "The purpose of the complex organization of flowers is to attract insects which will carry the pollen from flower to flower." The idea contained in this sentence determines the structure and the limits of the whole exposition.

Professor Goss's explanation of "The Locomotive" (p. 154) may be summed up in the sentence, "A locomotive resembles a stationary power-plant in principle, but has to be efficient under peculiar restraining conditions."

If you were to explain the production of cotton, the key-sentence might be, "The object of the cultivation is to produce the largest possible amount of clean long-fibred cotton." The topics might fall into such groups as the preparation of the ground, the sowing of the seed, the cultivation of the crop, the picking, the ginning and baling, with perhaps a conclusion on the uses of cotton.

The advantage of finding a good key-sentence is twofold: it makes your thoughts more clear and compact, so that you are more likely to stick to the subject, and it helps you to reduce a confused mass of topics to intelligible order. If you cannot devise such a sentence before drawing up your outline, you should try to do so afterwards, before you actually begin your exposition. It may enable you to improve the outline that you have prepared, and it will certainly assist you in writing your essay. Sometimes, indeed, it will serve as the opening sentence.

The key-sentence should ordinarily be written at the head of the outline.

THE INTRODUCTION IN EXPOSITIONS

Your **plan,** or **outline,** is now finished. It begins with the **key-sentence** in which you have summed up or defined the subject. Under the key-sentence you have written a list of well-arranged **topics,** and under each topic you have written, in proper order, a number of details which must be disposed of before the next topic is taken up. You are now ready to begin the actual writing of your exposition, and the outline will guide you in composing the whole essay.

Most expositions require an **introductory paragraph** of some kind, containing a concise and definite statement of what you mean to explain, with a definition if one is needed. The summary which you have already constructed in a single sentence will help you here. Sometimes you will be able to use it as it stands, as in Professor Davis's exposition (p. 149). Or it may be expanded and broken up into two or three sentences.

The introduction is also the place for any preliminary remarks that you desire to make. These may include: —

1. Your **reasons** for undertaking the exposition, if these affect either the selection of your material or its arrangement, or if there is any other ground for giving them.

2. Mention of the **audience** to whom the exposition is addressed or for whom it is intended, in case the character of the audience forces you to treat the subject in a peculiar or unexpected way.

3. A statement of the **order** in which you purpose to take up the several parts of the subject.

Emerson begins his essay on "Character" with a paragraph showing, by examples, what we mean by this term; his essay on "Compensation," with an account of how he came to write it; his essay on "Nature," with a description of a day in Indian summer.

In a book, the first chapter often serves as the introduction. Thus Professor Goss's explanation of the locomotive (p. 154) is Chapter I of his book on "Locomotive Sparks."

Four specimens of introductory paragraphs are given below. The first, from Addison's essay on "Exercise," is a short definition; the second, from his essay on "The Fairy Way of Writing," is more elaborate, but still simple and brief; the third, from Huxley's paper "On the Natural History of the Manlike Apes," is intended to rouse the reader's interest and to lead up to the subject; the fourth, from the first chapter of Mr. Long's "School of the Woods," introduces and illustrates the subject by telling a story.

1. Bodily labor is of two kinds, either that which a man submits to for his livelihood, or that which he undergoes for his pleasure. The latter of them generally changes the name of labor for that of exercise, but differs only from ordinary labor as it rises from another motive. — ADDISON.

2. There is a kind of writing wherein the poet quite loses sight of nature, and entertains his reader's imagination with the characters and actions of such persons as have, many of them, no existence but what he bestows on them. Such are fairies, witches, magicians, demons, and departed spirits. This Mr. Dryden calls "the fairy way of writing," which is, indeed, more difficult than any other that depends on the poet's fancy, because he has no pattern to follow in it, and must work altogether out of his own imagination. — ADDISON.

3. Ancient traditions, when tested by the severe processes of modern investigation, commonly enough fade away into mere dreams; but it is singular how often the dream turns out to have been a half-waking one, presaging a reality. Ovid foreshadowed the discoveries of the geologist; the Atlantis was an imagination, but Columbus found a western world; and, though the quaint forms of centaurs and satyrs have an existence only in the realms of art, creatures approaching man more nearly than they in essential structure, and yet as thoroughly brutal as the goat's or horse's

half of the mythical compound, are now not only known, but notorious. — Huxley.

4. Many years ago the writer saw, for the second time, a mother otter teach her unsuspecting little ones to swim by carrying them on her back into the water, as if for a frolic, and then diving from under them before they realized what she was about. As they struggled wildly in the unknown element, she rose near them and began to help and encourage them on their erratic way back to the bank. When they reached it at last, they scrambled out, whimpered, shook themselves, looked at the river fearfully, then glided into their den. Later they reappeared cautiously; but no amount of gentle persuasion on the mother's part could induce them to try for themselves another plunge into the water; nor, spite of her coaxing and playful rolling about in the dry leaves, would they climb again upon her back that day, as I had seen them and other young otters do, twenty times before, without hesitation. — William J. Long.

THE CONCLUSION IN EXPOSITIONS

When you have set forth in their due order the different topics of your exposition, you seem to have come to the end. To stop abruptly, however, may confuse the reader. It is usually better to clinch his understanding of the subject by means of a short **conclusion.**

This conclusion should ordinarily **sum up** what has preceded. It should bring the results together in a condensed form, so that they may be grasped by a single effort of the mind. **A bare enumeration of the several topics does not make a good conclusion.** What is needed is a concise statement of the sum and substance of the essay.

Here, as everywhere, **excessive formality is to be avoided.** The conclusion should not seem to be added, or tacked on; nor should it sound like a mere *finis*, — a notice that the end has come: it should illuminate the whole subject, so as to be worth reading for its own sake.

Thus Addison ends his essay on "The Importance of Exercise" with a brief paragraph which brings the whole subject before us in an impressive way: —

To conclude, as I am a compound of soul and body, I consider myself as obliged to a double scheme of duties; and I think I have not fulfilled the business of the day, when I do not thus employ the one in labor and exercise, as well as the other in study and contemplation.

Macaulay concludes his essay on Boswell's "Life of Johnson" with the following paragraph, which follows the short description quoted on p. 117: —

What a singular destiny has been that of this remarkable man! To be regarded in his own age as a classic, and in ours as a companion — to receive from his contemporaries that full homage which men of genius have in general received only from posterity — to be more intimately known to posterity than other men are known to their contemporaries! That kind of fame which is commonly the most transient, is, in his case, the most durable. The reputation of those writings which he probably expected to be immortal, is every day fading; while those peculiarities of manner, and that careless table-talk, the memory of which, he probably thought, would die with him, are likely to be remembered as long as the English language is spoken in any quarter of the globe.

In these words Macaulay sums up all that is most striking in the impression made by the book he has been discussing.

Sometimes the conclusion **refers back to the introduction,** reminding the reader of what the writer set out to do and showing that he has fulfilled his promise. Thus Mr. F. T. Bullen, who introduces his paper on "Devil-fish"[1] by remarking that "primitive peoples" ascribe

[1] In "Idylls of the Sea" (New York, D. Appleton & Company).

anything uncanny to the devil, closes with the following brief paragraph: —

> There are, of course, many other marine monstrosities to which with more or less show of reason the satanic epithet has been applied; but they are very little known or noticed, except within certain narrow limits. Probably enough has been said to justify simple savages, and almost equally simple-minded seamen, in bestowing upon the creatures of their dread a name which to them embodies all they are able to conceive of pitiless cruelty, unquenchable ferocity, and unmatchable cunning.

In like manner Ruskin closes the first lecture in his "Sesame and Lilies" with the words, "that old enchanted Arabian grain, the Sesame, which opens doors, — doors not of robbers' but of Kings' Treasuries." These words refer back to the introduction, where the title of the lecture ("Of Kings' Treasuries") has been explained.

Still another use for the conclusion is to **make an application** of what has been written.

> Emerson closes his essay on "Character" with a fine paragraph of definite moral application beginning, "If we cannot attain at a bound to these grandeurs, at least let us do them homage." His essay on "Self-Reliance" ends with an exhortation to his readers to practise the virtue that he has been expounding: "Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles."

One should take care, however, not to end with a truism or a commonplace bit of moral sentiment. It is better to stop short than to make "a lame and impotent conclusion."

In an essay of moderate length, a single paragraph will suffice for the concluding summary or application. In a book, the last chapter often serves as a conclusion. Whatever the length or nature of the conclusion, it should really **bring the book or essay to an end.** We should not broach a fresh subject in the closing chapter or paragraph.

TRANSITION IN EXPOSITION

When you are started on the actual writing of your exposition, how can you be sure that the reader will follow you and see all the facts, and their connections, in just the way you intend? He will not have before him the plan which you are using. All that he has to guide him is what you have said in your introduction. How can you prevent him from losing the thread?

The surest way is to give the reader notice of each new step in the explanation. This notice comes naturally in the **transition from paragraph to paragraph.**[1] It may be given by a single word like *however* or *moreover;* by a phrase like *in the meanwhile, on the other hand,* or *in the second place;* or sometimes by a complete sentence, when the connection is not immediately obvious, or else for any reason must be made especially clear. In every case, the notice should be so distinct that the reader cannot miss it. He should not be allowed to pass from one step in the explanation to another without being aware of his progress.

Burke, in his exposition of the reasons why the American colonists love liberty,[2] treats of six causes in as many paragraphs, and sums up in a seventh. Each paragraph begins with a sentence indicating the transition: —

1. First, the people of the colonies are the descendants of Englishmen.

2. They were further confirmed in this pleasing error [i.e. the belief that they had the rights of Englishmen] by the form of their provincial legislative assemblies.

3. If anything were wanting to this necessary operation of the form of government, religion would have given it a complete effect.

[1] For a further study of methods of transition, see pp. 285 ff.

[2] In his "Speech on Conciliation with America."

4. Sir, I can perceive by their manner that some gentlemen object to the latitude of this description, because in the southern colonies the Church of England forms a large body and has a regular establishment.

5. Permit me, sir, to add another circumstance in our colonies, which contributes no mean part towards the growth and effect of this untractable spirit: I mean, their education.

6. The last cause of this disobedient spirit in the colonies is hardly less powerful than the rest.

7. Then, sir, from these six capital sources —.

The effect of Burke's care for transition is to bind his exposition so firmly together that the six causes, though kept perfectly distinct in the reader's mind, can be comprehended almost as easily as if there were only one.

It is often of great assistance to the reader to begin a new paragraph with some reference to what immediately precedes. Of the sentences just quoted from Burke, all after the first contain more or less distinct references to the preceding paragraph.

Professor Goss (p. 155) begins one paragraph with "In passing from stationary power-plants to moving power-plants" and another with "Despite such limiting conditions."

Lubbock (p. 151) begins some of his paragraphs as follows: "In species where the pollen is wind-borne"; "Now, why has the flower this peculiar form?" He also employs paragraphs of a single sentence or of two sentences to emphasize transition: as, — "What, then, is the use and purpose of this complex organization?" and "Let us now apply these views to a few common flowers. Take, for instance, the white dead-nettle." In each case the reference knits the explanation more closely together, and makes it easier to keep all the parts in mind at the same time.[1]

Remember that the sense of clear arrangement which a good exposition gives the reader is dependent on bringing related facts together into groups, and that ordinarily

[1] For other examples, see pp. 286–288.

these groups are indicated by paragraphs. As you pass to each new paragraph, then, be sure that your reader is aware not only of the transition, but also of the nature of the new group of facts, and of its connection with what has gone before.

Few devices do more to make an exposition clear and agreeable reading than this distinctness in the transition from paragraph to paragraph. On the other hand, if the transition is indistinct and vague, the exposition, though perfectly clear in all its parts, may be difficult and tiresome to follow.

NOTE. — What has been said of the transition from paragraph to paragraph applies also, on a larger scale, to the transition from one group of paragraphs to another. Here a whole paragraph of a transitional character may be needed to give notice that a new topic is now to be taken up (see pp. 292–293).

COHERENCE IN EXPOSITION

Coherence in exposition depends largely, as we have seen (p. 160), on skilful **arrangement of material.** Such arrangement with proper care for introduction, transition, and conclusion binds an essay together into the expression of a single, logical process of thought. Incoherent writing may sometimes come from an exact and sustained thinker; but coherent writing can come from such a thinker only. When, therefore, a writer begins and ends abruptly and jumps from one topic to another, we are apt to doubt his competence to deal with his subject. On the other hand, the firm and coherent structure which we observe in such authors as Burke, Macaulay, and Newman makes us feel instinctively that they are clear and powerful thinkers who have mastered their subjects. Accordingly, we listen

respectfully to what they have to say and are ready to allow due weight to their opinions.

A good example of well-constructed exposition may be seen in Carlyle's discussion of the character of Burns.[1]

Carlyle begins by explaining why, as he thinks, the disasters of Burns's life were not due to unfortunate circumstances, to lack of patronage, or to the world's unkindness. He then asks himself where the responsibility does actually lie, and replies: "With himself; it is his inward, not his outward misfortunes that bring him to the dust." "The error of Burns," he continues, "was the want of unity in his purposes, of consistency in his aims." The rest of the essay is a clear and forcible exposition of this text. In concluding, Carlyle warns the reader against harsh condemnation and justifies that "pitying admiration" with which Burns is regarded by all men of right feeling.

EXAMPLES IN EXPOSITION

The use of **examples** will often help to make an exposition clear and vivid. An apt example may fix the sense of a word, or enforce a general principle, more effectually than a page of abstract exposition. Thus Dr. John Brown, the author of "Rab and his Friends," in a paper on "Presence of Mind," uses a number of anecdotes to explain his meaning and emphasize the importance of the quality he is discussing. Here is one of his examples: —

A lady was in front of her lawn with her children, when a mad dog made his appearance, pursued by the peasants. What did she do? What would you have done? Shut your eyes and think. She went straight to the dog, received its head in her thick stuff gown, between her knees, and, muffling it up, held it with all her might till the men came up. No one was hurt. Of course, she fainted after it was all right.

[1] In the last fourteen paragraphs of his "Essay on Burns."

Macaulay, in explaining the naïve way in which Herodotus wrote history, gives an imaginary example from common life: —

The faults of Herodotus are the faults of a simple and imaginative mind. Children and servants are remarkably Herodotean in their style of narration. Their *says he's* and *says she's* are proverbial. Every person who has had to settle their disputes knows that, even when they have no intention to deceive, their reports of conversation always require to be carefully sifted. If an educated man were giving an account of the late change of administration, he would say, "Lord Goderich resigned, and the king in consequence sent for the Duke of Wellington." A porter tells the story as if he had been hidden behind curtains of the royal bed at Windsor: "So Lord Goderich says, 'I cannot manage this business; I must go out.' So the king says, says he, 'Well, then, I must send for the Duke of Wellington, that's all.'" This is the very manner of the father of history. — MACAULAY.

Emerson begins his essay on "Character" with a paragraph showing, by several examples, what he means by this term. Note the numerous examples of courteous kindness in little things which Newman uses in his "Definition of a Gentleman." Bacon's "Essays" are full of illustrative examples, briefly and pithily phrased.

In the explanation of a process, and in scientific exposition in general, examples are almost always necessary.

Grey writes his exposition of an "Australian Kangaroo Hunt" (p. 147) as if he were describing a single instance of such a hunt. Lubbock drives home his exposition of "The Fertilization of Plants" (p. 152) by examples of the number of pollen grains in a peony and a dandelion, and then adds, "Let us now apply these views to a few common flowers."

Well-selected examples not only make an exposition clearer: they also add greatly to its liveliness and interest. The aim of an exposition is to instruct; but that does not give it a right to be dull. A work of science or of

history may be as fascinating as a novel. The offence of dullness brings its own punishment by defeating the purpose of the explanation. A prosy writer makes a sleepy reader. Examples, however, should always be familiar enough to the reader to assist him in grasping your idea. A far-fetched example is worse than useless. To employ such an illustration is "to explain the difficult by means of the more difficult," — a very serious fault in composition.

COMPARISON AND CONTRAST IN EXPOSITION

In many cases the simplest way to explain one thing is by **comparing** or **contrasting** it with another.[1]

Dr. Van Dyke begins his explanation of how to make a smudge (p. 145) by telling you how not to do it. Professor Goss (p. 154) brings out the difficulties of designing a locomotive by comparing it with a stationary engine. So, in studying the structure and anatomy of animals, it is not unusual to begin with the consideration of some familiar animal, like the cat, and to use this as the standard of comparison from which the structure of other animals varies.

If you have younger brothers or sisters, you are always explaining things to them by comparison. In such a case, be sure, in the first place, that you see clearly just what it is that they wish to know. Then consider what they already know about the subject; or, if it is quite new to them, think of something with which they are familiar, as a starting point for your explanation. Finally, be sure that you couch your explanation in terms that they understand; or, if you must use an unfamiliar term, explain it carefully before you go on.

The suggestions in the preceding paragraph apply to every grade of composition. If the method is to be useful,

[1] The principle is the same as in description (see pp. 120–123).

the comparison must be made with an object or idea which is already **familiar to the reader.** It would only double your task to choose something which must itself be explained. Moreover, the points of resemblance should be clear and obvious, and the points of difference equally well marked. Finally, as soon as the comparison has served its purpose of aiding in the exposition, it should be dropped at once.

The utility of comparison with familiar objects is well illustrated by Professor Shaler in the following passage,[1] in which he explains how the mountain ranges of this continent were formed: —

Let these pages represent the rocks of that part of the earth's crust occupied by the Cordilleras, the right-hand side the east, the left side the west, as on a map: press them together from the sides and we can fold them into ridges. This pressure, and the consequent corrugations of the paper, represent in a rude, diagrammatic way the force and the effects of the pressure which created the main chains of the Cordilleras. Press the sheets less strongly in the plane from top to bottom of the book, and we find that there is a tendency to form folds across the page. This experiment is imperfect in its results, because the sheets of paper are thin, small, and very flexible; but we may with some thought conceive how thick beds of rock, occupying a field a thousand miles across, might fold in two different ways under the influence of pressure acting in two diverse lines.

The following passage from one of Goldsmith's essays compares the ancient Athenians with the Englishmen of the author's day: —

We might here draw a parallel between the inhabitants of Athens and the natives of England in point of constitution, genius, and disposition. Athens was a free state like England, that piqued itself upon the influence of the democracy. Like England, its wealth and strength depended upon its maritime

[1] From "The Story of Our Continent" (Boston, Ginn & Company).

power; and it generally acted as umpire in the disputes that arose among its neighbors. The people of Athens, like those of England, were remarkably ingenious, and made great progress in the arts and sciences. They excelled in poetry, history, philosophy, mechanics, and manufactures; they were acute, discerning, disputatious, fickle, wavering, rash, and combustible, and, above all other nations in Europe, addicted to ridicule, — a character which the English inherit in a very remarkable degree.

Comparison is especially useful in explaining **abstract or intangible subjects or ideas.** It enables the reader "to pass," as we say, "from the known to the unknown," — from the specific and real to the general and immaterial. It also assists the reader's memory. A vivid and striking comparison fixes in his mind the idea or principle, which, without it, might soon fade away and disappear. In both of the passages that follow, the purpose of the writers is the same, — to define *invention* in art or literature. The first (by Sir Joshua Reynolds) is admirably expressed; the second (by Mrs. Shelley) is excellent, but not quite so highly finished as the other. Of the two, however, the second is likely to dwell longer in the memory, because of its liveliness, and, in particular, because of the comparison with which it ends.

Invention, strictly speaking, is little more than a new combination of those images which have been previously gathered and deposited in the memory. Nothing can come of nothing; he who has laid up no materials can produce no combinations. — Sir Joshua Reynolds.

Everything must have a beginning, to speak in Sanchean[1] phrase; and that beginning must be linked to something that went before. The Hindoos give the world an elephant to support it, but they make the elephant stand upon a tortoise. Invention,

[1] An allusion to Sancho Panza, Don Quixote's page, who was fond of proverbs and proverbial phrases.

it must be humbly admitted, does not consist in creating out of void, but out of chaos ; the materials must, in the first place, be afforded : it can give form to dark, shapeless substances, but cannot bring into being the substance itself. In all matters of discovery and invention, even of those that appertain to the imagination, we are continually reminded of the story of Columbus and his egg. Invention consists in the capacity of seizing on the capabilities of a subject, and in the power of moulding and fashioning ideas suggested to it. — Mrs. Shelley.

THE USE OF DIAGRAMS

In many cases you can hardly make an exposition clear without using **diagrams** or pictures. It is impossible, for example, to explain a problem in geometry without a diagram ; and without a map or plan it would be difficult to make a stranger understand how your town is laid out. So in most expositions of machines and of the shapes of plants or animals, diagrams or figures are necessary.

If you try to reproduce Sir John Lubbock's exposition without the diagrams, you will at once recognize their value. Without the figures, the exposition would have taken much more space, and after all would have been far less clear and accurate. The diagram in Professor Goss's exposition (p. 157) shows at a glance how much harder it is to design a locomotive than a stationary engine. Note also the use of diagrams and figures to supplement and illustrate the definitions in any large dictionary. You will find abundant examples of the value of diagrams in exposition in your text-books of botany, physiology, and physics.

Diagrams should be as simple as possible, and should not be cumbered with superfluous details. A simple outline drawing, with letters or numerals for reference, is usually sufficient. Beauty and artistic finish are scarcely expected in such illustrations. Their chief requirements are clearness and accuracy.

EXPOSITION IN WRITTEN "TESTS"

Tests and **written examinations** afford excellent practice in exposition; for they require you to collect and express your knowledge in a limited time. Your mind, therefore, must work both quickly and accurately, and you must apply the principles of exposition as if they were second nature. Before you write the answer to a question, take a minute or two to recall what you have learned about the subject and to consider how you can best set forth your knowledge. Jot down on a bit of paper the things that you must mention, and the order in which to write about them. Then tell what you know as clearly as possible. When you have finished your paper, read it over to see if you have omitted anything or have made any other mistakes that you can correct.

Not only will this plan give you valuable practice in composition, but it will save time and pay well in its actual result on your standing in the class. Test papers and examination books are marked by persons who have a good many of them to read, and who often have to work rapidly. When, therefore, the examiner comes to a paper in which it is easy to grasp the facts, he inevitably gives it a higher grade. This is quite proper. You cannot pass a good examination unless you can make yourself clear. An exposition which is mixed up and obscure usually goes back to a fragmentary and confused knowledge of the subject.

It is because examinations require you not only to know things, but also to have your knowledge ready for instant use, that they play so important a part in mental training. Professional scholars may take plenty of time to work up their ideas into presentable shape. Men of affairs, on the contrary, must, in the give and take of active life, use what they know at a moment's notice. Examinations, whether written or oral, help to form this habit of thinking quickly and remembering without too long deliberation.

ABSTRACTS

Not infrequently one is required to prepare an **abstract** or **summary** of a paper or of a passage from a book. At school or college, for instance, you must be able to make useful notes on your reading; in business your employer may ask you to collect and present to him the substance of a report or of a number of documents.

The first thing to do in such cases is to read the paper through. Unless you do this, you cannot understand the writer's purpose, and therefore you cannot judge what is important and decide what you may omit. Your comprehension of the main purpose of the writer will largely determine the value of your summary.

The important points should then be clearly stated and duly emphasized. If the abstract must be short, you may be able to preserve nothing except these points. If you have space, insert short quotations or striking examples from the original document. These will impart to your abstract something of the effect of the original and will thus make it a more adequate substitute. Be careful, however, that such quotations and examples do not obscure significant facts.

Care in paragraphing will stand you in good stead; for the indentations in the page will indicate at once to the eye the main divisions of the subject, and will therefore save words. So, again, you can put minor facts into the subordinate clauses and phrases of your sentences, and thus make your abstract fuller without lessening the emphasis on more important points.

A **report** of a lecture or address is of much the same nature as an abstract, except that here you must rely on your memory or on your notes for the facts that you

mean to include. Always try to apprehend and make clear the main outlines of what you report: that is essential. Then fill in the report with illustrations which the lecturer used and with words or turns of phrase which are characteristic of him.

The writing of abstracts and reports may seem dry work; but few exercises give better training in all that makes for efficiency. In the first place, since no one can write a good abstract unless he understands what he is summarizing, the exercise fosters the habit of reading attentively and with thorough comprehension. In the second place, it sharpens your sense of what is important, for you are obliged to distinguish the essential points from what is of less consequence. Finally, it increases your vocabulary, for you have to use a somewhat different set of words for every subject and every author.

For these reasons every student should be scrupulous about the form of the notes which he takes, whether of his reading or of lectures. Slovenly habits in this respect may go far to destroy the result of many hours spent in the study of English composition; and, on the other hand, the ability to take good notes is of direct practical advantage both in business and in school or college.

EXPOSITION OF CHARACTER

The close relation between descriptive and expository writing comes out in the **exposition of character.** Description of the character of an *individual* often runs over into exposition of a *type* of character, so that no clear line can be drawn between the two. For example, you might describe Washington's character by explaining the highest type of the American gentleman and then pointing to him

as the best example of the type; or you might explain what qualities an American gentleman should have by describing Washington as the best example.

In the main, the description of an individual makes free use of specific facts that, taken together, would apply to no one else; the exposition of a type consists of general assertions that apply to all similar cases.

George Eliot's descriptions of her characters often approach very closely to exposition. The description of Godfrey Cass in Chapter III of "Silas Marner" has the following passage:—

> Godfrey stood still with his back to the fire, uneasily moving his fingers among the contents of his side-pockets, and looking at the floor. That big muscular frame of his held plenty of animal courage, but helped him to no decision when the dangers to be braved were such as could neither be knocked down nor throttled. His natural irresolution and moral cowardice were exaggerated by a position in which dreaded consequences seemed to press equally on all sides, and his irritation no sooner provoked him to defy Dunstan and anticipate all possible betrayals, than the miseries he must bring on himself by such a step seemed more unendurable to him than the present evil. The results of confession were not contingent, they were certain; whereas betrayal was not certain. From the near vision of that certainty he fell back on suspense and vacillation with a sense of repose.

Newman's exposition, "The Gentleman" (pp. 399–400) is a good example of the exposition of character. It might be called an extended **definition**. He specifies a great many traits, all of which, however, come under the general statement at the beginning, "It is almost a definition of a gentleman to say that he is one who never inflicts pain." Without the minute specification of details, the explanation would be incomplete; without the single principle, these details would be scattering and inconclusive.

The similarity, as well as the difference, between description and exposition in the matter of character may be seen clearly by comparing Hazlitt's description of the character of Polonius with Dr. Johnson's exposition of the same character. Both passages are famous, and both deserve their reputation. Johnson begins with Polonius as an individual, but soon runs over into an exposition of the general type; he comes back to Polonius at the end. Hazlitt keeps his eye on the individual throughout; yet his description is partly expository. Of the two passages, Dr. Johnson's is the juster account of Polonius.

Polonius is a man bred in courts, exercised in business, stored with observation, confident in his knowledge, proud of his eloquence, and declining into dotage. His mode of oratory is truly represented as designed to ridicule the practice of those times, of prefaces that made no introduction, and of method that embarrassed rather than explained. This part of his character is accidental, the rest is natural. Such a man is positive and confident, because he knows that his mind was once strong, and knows not that it is become weak. Such a man excels in general principles, but fails in the particular application. He is knowing in retrospect, and ignorant in foresight. While he depends upon his memory, and can draw from his repositories of knowledge, he utters weighty sentences, and gives useful council; but, as the mind in its enfeebled state cannot be kept long busy and intent, the old man is subject to sudden dereliction of his faculties, he loses the order of his ideas, and entangles himself in his own thought, till he recovers the leading principle, and falls again into his former train. This idea of dotage encroaching upon wisdom will solve all the phenomena of the character of Polonius. — JOHNSON.

Polonius is a perfect character in its kind; nor is there any foundation for the objections which have been made to the consistency of this part. It has been said that he acts very foolishly and talks very sensibly. There is no inconsistency in that. Again, that he talks wisely at one time and foolishly at another; that

his advice to Laertes is very excellent, and his advice to the king and queen on the subject of Hamlet's madness very ridiculous. But he gives the one as a father, and is sincere in it; he gives the other as a mere courtier, a busybody, and is accordingly officious, garrulous, and impertinent. In short, Shakspere has been accused of inconsistency in this and other characters, only because he has kept up the distinction which there is in nature between the understandings and the moral habits of men, between the absurdity of their ideas and the absurdity of their motives. Polonius is not a fool, but he makes himself so. His folly, whether in his actions or speeches, comes under the head of impropriety of intention. — HAZLITT.

These two extracts show how impossible it is to sort and label different types of literature in accordance with any rigid system of classification. Description and exposition run into each other, and there can be no definite line of separation between them. In general, the distinction depends upon the writer's **purpose** (see pp. 96–97); but in many instances, when the purpose is both to explain something and to make us see it vividly, an author combines the methods of exposition with those of description. In such cases, it makes little difference to which of these two forms of discourse we assign the passage.

SUMMARY OF PRINCIPLES

In summing up the **practical principles of exposition,** we must remember that the essential thing in explanation is the orderly arrangement of the material. An outline or plan is of the greatest assistance in perfecting this arrangement; an introduction and a conclusion in definite terms are usually necessary to make it obvious to the reader. As you pass from one step of the exposition to another, give notice of your progress.

In writing out the complete exposition, be careful of paragraphing and of sentence structure. Effective paragraphing is the surest and easiest way to indicate the divisions of a subject; and without a variety of sentences it is impossible to express any except the simplest relations between facts or ideas. Be particular, too, in the selection of words, for carelessness or inaccuracy in this respect may seriously obscure your meaning.

Remember, too, the value of diagrams. In many cases you can give more help by a sketch map than by a page of description.

Finally, make your exposition interesting to the reader. This you can accomplish in two ways. In the first place, you may bring it into connection with his own experience and with objects with which he is familiar. It always arouses our interest to discover unsuspected relations between things with which we are already well acquainted. With this in view, Sir John Lubbock shows how necessary a bumblebee is to a nettle flower (p. 152).

In the second place, do not hesitate to put color and action into an exposition when you can do so without distracting the reader. The more you can stimulate his attention, the more easily he will follow you. Grey's "Australian Kangaroo Hunt" (p. 147) is all the better for being lively and picturesque, and the humor of Dr. Van Dyke's directions for a smudge makes them easier to remember. Do not confine yourself to cold and abstract generalities. Illustrate and exemplify your general principles by applying them to specific facts or individual cases.

The exposition of an abstruse subject may require some study before it is fully comprehended; but the writer should not add to the difficulty and discourage the reader by a dull and lifeless style.

LITERARY CRITICISM

One of the prime objects of education is to foster a taste for reading and to cultivate a discriminating appreciation of the best books. Accordingly, every educated person needs the power to express his judgment of what he reads. Such a judgment is called a **criticism** (from the Greek word meaning "to judge").

Almost all book reviews fall under the head of criticism; and much of the best criticism has appeared in this form. Some reviews attempt only to summarize the works under consideration. Such reviews, though they may be very useful, cannot be called criticisms. Indeed, they are rather book notices than reviews.

Though one usually knows in a general way what one's opinion of a book is, it is often by no means easy to put this opinion into appropriate words. Criticism, indeed, is one of the most difficult kinds of composition. It demands knowledge, insight, a judicial temper, and an uncommon keenness of discrimination. A critic must often distinguish between things which are in the main very much alike, and to express such subtle differences requires a large vocabulary and great skill and exactness in using it.

Perhaps the quickest means of defining one's impression of any book is to compare it mentally with another book of a similar nature. Suppose, for example, you wish to express your opinion of Hawthorne's "House of the Seven Gables." If you call before your mind George Eliot's "Silas Marner," which likewise deals with the persistent effect of wrongdoing, you see at once that Hawthorne portrays far subtler and less tangible characteristics of human nature; and that, though his people

seem real, yet they do not quite belong to the workaday world that we know. This observation makes you note the constant play of fantasy and imagination which so often brings Hawthorne's stories to the verge of poetry, and your criticism is well begun. On the other hand, you observe the relentless way in which George Eliot follows out the consequences of an evil deed, — the almost scientific precision with which she traces its far-reaching results.

You may often use such a comparison in the actual expression of your judgment, — that is, in your criticism of the book.[1] Dr. Johnson, one of the greatest of English critics, was fond of this method. Here is what he wrote in discussing the poetry of Alexander Pope: —

> If the flights of Dryden are higher, Pope continues longer on the wing. If of Dryden's fire the blaze is brighter, of Pope's the heat is more regular and constant. Dryden often surpasses expectation, and Pope never falls below it. Dryden is read with frequent astonishment, and Pope with perpetual delight.

Macaulay's parallel between Milton and Dante is a well-known example of the same method. By means of this contrast, illustrated by copious extracts from both poets, Macaulay makes clear his point that Milton's fallen angels, though still spirits, "have just enough in common with human nature to be intelligible to human beings"; that "their characters are, like their forms, marked by a certain dim resemblance to those of men, but exaggerated to gigantic dimensions and veiled in mysterious gloom." Later in the essay he uses the same parallel to bring out the distinction that "the character of Milton was distinguished by loftiness of spirit; that of Dante by intensity of feeling."

[1] On comparison and contrast in exposition, see p. 182.

In no case, however, should a comparison be pursued unless it turns out to be of practical service in explaining your ideas. Nor should it be far-fetched or over-ingenious. If the similarity or dissimilarity is not easily recognizable, the reader is likely to become confused and lose his interest. Finally, when a comparison has done its work, it should be dropped; it should not be carried out in wearisome detail. Incidental comparisons, like that of Burns and Byron in Carlyle's "Essay on Burns," are often more effective than long and labored parallels.

In writing your criticism, make plentiful reference to the facts of the book, in order to back up your general assertions. If you can quote a few passages, so much the better; for then you may be sure that the reader will understand the grounds of your opinion. A general statement, not thus supported by quotations or specific references, may apply to so many books that it gives the reader no individual idea of the particular work which you are criticising.

Do not confuse criticism with fault-finding. Almost any one can point out some blemish in even the greatest work; but such carping seldom serves any useful purpose. If, on the other hand, you can suggest the power of a work or indicate its beauties and excellences, you may add to your reader's enjoyment and appreciation of good literature. Indiscriminate praise, however, is quite as worthless as indiscriminate censure.

Before you try to express your opinion of a book, be sure that you understand the author's purpose. Do not pass judgment on Dickens's "David Copperfield" as if you thought he had tried to write an exciting story of adventure, or on Longfellow as if he ought to have written in as martial and stirring a strain as Sir Walter Scott. Your

estimate, if it is to be fair, must include an appreciation of the author's aim. Every author has a right to choose his own subject and his own manner of treating it. A critic may express an opinion on the author's success or failure in doing what he undertook to do; but to assert that he ought to have been doing something else is arrogance rather than criticism.

Finally, criticism should never be a bare statement of personal preference. The mere assertion that Dickens is your favorite author, or that you like Longfellow better than Bryant, is about as profitable as the remark that blue is your favorite color, or that you do not like tea so well as coffee. It may interest your personal friends, but it can hardly concern any one else. What your criticism should do is to analyze your impression, to point out what is admirable in your author, and perhaps in part to define the means by which this admirable effect is produced. In this way criticism is analogous to the exposition of a character (p. 188); for it aims to select and make evident those traits and qualities that give a book individuality and make it different from any other.

NOTE. — Criticism is a very advanced form of composition and may therefore be too difficult for the students unless they have acquired considerable skill in writing. If it is found desirable to attempt it, the teacher may prepare the way by bringing out diversities of opinion in a class-room discussion, and by insisting on the separation of mere differences of taste from differences of judgment. Then each pupil may write out his own judgment, supporting it by constant reference to the work in hand. Such practice connects itself closely with the study of literature. Free expression of opinion as to the authors who are read in the course of study should be encouraged; but sweeping condemnation or indiscriminate praise may be controlled by asking for reasons. Above all things, the student should not attempt impossible things. He should not be allowed to waste his time in arranging ten American poets in the order of their eminence, or other such futile tasks.

TYPES OF CRITICISM

One type of criticism, of which Dr. Johnson is the great English exponent, attempts to decide outright whether a book is "good" or not. The weakness of this method comes from the difficulty of fixing a standard, since what is "good" in literature is largely a matter of taste. When, however, a criticism of this sort is based upon such wide reading, sound common sense, and uprightness of character, as Dr. Johnson's, it is almost always helpful and may be illuminating.[1]

Other critics take a single aspect of literature and estimate an author or a book solely or principally with reference to that. Thus they may lay stress on the moral (or **ethical**) qualities of a work, — on its noble sentiments, its earnest purpose, its powerful appeal to what is good in human nature, or, on the other hand, on its lack of moral earnestness, its frivolity, its cynicism. Or they may confine their discussion to purely literary and **artistic** qualities, — the style, the proportions, the general effect, — judging the book as they would a picture or a statue. Carlyle's "Essay on Burns" is a conspicuous example of the ethical temper. Its chief purpose is to explain how the poet's character affected his life, and it is written from the point of view of a stern though loving and compassionate judge. Walter Pater's writings, some of Stevenson's essays, and Mr. Gates's "Studies and Appreciations" illustrate the artistic spirit in criticism.

Still another type of criticism busies itself with tracing out the causes that have made a work just what it is and

[1] See Johnson's "Lives of the Poets" for examples. This type of criticism is sometimes called **magisterial** (from the Latin *magister*, "a master" or "teacher"). The dangers and defects of this method are emphasized by Hazlitt in the preface to his "Characters of Shakspere's Plays."

with determining its place in the history of literature. This method is called **historical** or **scientific** criticism. It is often very enlightening. We can understand Shakspere's "Richard III" much better, for example, if we know that he wrote it under the influence of the full-mouthed and somewhat ranting style of Marlowe; and "Love's Labor's Lost" becomes more intelligible when we recognize in the dialogue the crackle of repartee which characterizes the comedies of Lyly. Macaulay's essay on Addison is a familiar example of the method of studying an author's works in connection with his life and with the various influences that made him what he was.

Finally, there is a type of criticism which undertakes to reproduce for the reader the impressions which a work makes on the critic's mind and feelings. Some of the most exquisite criticism of recent times follows this method. It requires a rare combination of qualities in the critic himself. To a temperament naturally sensitive to impressions of every kind, he must add a taste cultivated by an intimate and sympathetic acquaintance with the best literature. And besides all this, he must be master of a style which shall enable him to express what he feels, — and to express it with distinctness and precision in its most delicate shades of difference. Such criticism is called **æsthetic,**[1] or (sometimes) **impressionistic.** Manifestly it is of great value in the interpretation of literature. Hazlitt's "Characters of Shakspere's Plays" is an example of the kind of criticism that aims to communicate to the reader the impressions which the work discussed has made upon the critic himself. Hazlitt interprets the characters of Shakspere in terms of emotion and feeling.

[1] From the Greek word for "feeling."

The different types of criticism may be combined in various ways. Thus a critic may begin by searching for the causes to which the peculiar characteristics of a work are due, and may then proceed to pass judgment on it or to describe the impression that it makes on his mind and feelings. Or he may first describe his impressions, and then trace the influences which have affected the writer. And, in either case, he may also consider the ethical tendencies of the work, or its merits and defects from an artistic point of view. In criticism, as in all other departments of literature, types and classes run into each other.

Criticism is not confined to literature. The same principles apply equally to the expression of taste and judgment in other branches of the fine arts. A critic of painting describes the methods of Raphael, of Rembrandt, of Millet, or of Whistler, estimates the value of their contribution to our culture or enjoyment, and defines their place in the history of their art, just as a musical critic examines and discusses the symphonies of Beethoven or the operas of Wagner. Histories of sculpture or of architecture consist largely of discussions of single statues or buildings or of the work of individual sculptors or architects. But whether the criticism be of a poem or of a sonata, of a statue or of a city hall, it should always be based on knowledge and sympathy, and expressed with moderation and a fine sense of proportion.

EXERCISES IN EXPOSITION

Oral Exercises

Prepare to talk for two minutes upon one of the following subjects. Your preparation may consist in observing the thing which you are to describe, in reading about it, or in conversation with well-informed persons. Make notes of what you see, hear, and read; think carefully about the subject, and be ready to talk clearly in the order presented in the outline.

Speak distinctly, slowly enough to make it easy to follow your meaning, and in a pleasant tone. Pronounce your words accurately, not clipping or slurring them as in rapid and careless conversation. Think of your hearers rather than of yourself.

1. My pencil.
   - *a.* Tell just what a pencil is.
   - *b.* The manufacture of pencils. (Learn all that you can about it, by conversation or reading.)
     - (*a*) Materials used.
     - (*b*) Sources of materials.
     - (*c*) Process of manufacture.
     - (*d*) Well-known firms engaged in the manufacture of pencils.
   - *c.* The uses of a pencil.
2. Description of a church in my town.
   - *a.* General appearance, — site, style of architecture, size, material.
   - *b.* Interior.
3. How to build a fire.
   - *a.* Preparation of the place.
   - *b.* Collection of material.
   - *c.* Arrangement of material.
   - *d.* Care of the fire.
4. Fuel (wood, coal, coke, oil, gas).
   - *a.* Source.
   - *b.* Cost.
   - *c.* Advantages.
   - *d.* Disadvantages.

5. Hollyhocks.
   a. Describe the flowers.
   b. Tell how to cultivate them.
6. How to care for a lawn.
   a. Describe a well-kept lawn.
   b. Describe the means by which a lawn is kept in good condition.
7. How bricks are made.
   a. What are bricks?
   b. From what material are they made?
   c. Where are brickyards naturally situated?
   d. What is the process of making bricks?
8. Charcoal.
   a. Tell what it is.
   b. Describe the manufacture of charcoal.
   c. Chief uses.
      (*a*) For what.
      (*b*) By whom.
9. Cranberries.
   a. The berry.
   b. The cranberry vine.
   c. How the cranberry is cultivated.
   d. Chief sources of supply.
   e. Uses of the berry.
10. How to set up a tent.
   a. Description of the tent.
   b. Appropriate place for a tent.
   c. Process of setting it up.
11. The building of a schoolhouse.
   a. Initial steps. By whom are they taken?
   b. Authority to build. In whom is it vested?
   c. Location of the schoolhouse. What determines it? By whom is the site selected?
   d. Size of the building. What determines it? Who decides this point?
   e. The amount to be appropriated and expended. What determines this? What authority finally decides the matter?

f. Steps taken in securing the plans and locating the building. Outline them.
g. Trades represented in the transaction.
h. What persons are or should be interested in securing an adequate building? Why?

12. An ideal school building.
a. Explain the necessary elements.
b. Explain the desirable features. Present these from the point of view of (1) the pupil; (2) the teacher; (3) the taxpayer.

13. The carpenter.
a. What is his work?
b. What materials does he work with?
c. What tools does he require? Describe some of them.
d. How does he learn his trade?
e. What studies in school contribute directly to his preparation?

14. Following the topics outlined in Exercise 13, describe the work of the blacksmith; the electrician; the mason; the plumber; the merchant.

15. You intend to live for the next few years in a very warm climate. What changes will this involve —
a. In your dress?
b. In your diet?
c. In your habits of life?

16. Describe (in accordance with the following outline) some game which you play.
a. The players required.
b. Materials supplied for the game.
c. Object of the game.
d. Rules of the game.

17. You are the leader of an expedition to the Arctic regions. What preparations must you make?
a. The ship (build; provisions, etc.).
b. The crew and their equipment.
c. Scientific men and their instruments.
d. Means of traversing the ice.

Outlines and Key-Sentences (pp. 165–171)

Examples: —

1. A Pine Cone.

Key-Sentence: A pine cone — the round, tapering fruit of the pine — is made up of woody scales, each of which bears one or two seeds at its base.

I. Its appearance.
II. Its structure.
III. The ripe and the unripe cone compared.
  a. Scales: shape, size, arrangement.
  b. Seeds: appearance, number, position.
IV. Use or function of the cone.
V. Varieties of cones, on different pines.

2. A China Teacup.

Key-Sentence: A china teacup is made from a fine grade of clay, moulded, baked, and glazed in such a way that it becomes delicately translucent and exceedingly fragile.

I. Material. (What? Where obtained?)
II. Manufacture.
  a. Process of shaping.
  b. Decoration and glazing.
  c. Firing.
III. Visit to a pottery or china shop.
IV. Describe an exquisite piece of china, comparing it with a coarse bit of pottery.

Construct outlines, in the manner of the two examples, for exposition of the subjects in the following list. Prepare a key-sentence for each outline. Exchange outlines for criticism.

1. A paper box.
2. A wagon wheel.
3. A horseshoe.
4. A paper of pins.
5. Bone and its uses.
6. A wheelbarrow.
7. My best penknife.
8. Peanuts.
9. Sweet potatoes.
10. How hay is made.
11. How a roof is shingled.
12. How laws are made.
13. How a colt is broken.
14. How a dog is trained.
15. How a boy has a good time.
16. What girls like to do.
17. How Jack raised chickens.
18. What a normal school is.

Introduction and Conclusion (pp. 172–176)

1. Turn to the Oral Exercises on page 200, and prepare introductory sentences for each exposition. Let some of these sentences be questions: as, —

"Do you know how we harvest ice in winter, Jack? Let me tell you."

2. Turn to a text-book in physics, physical geography, or history; find a good exposition, and study the introduction. If there is no introduction, explain the author's reason for omitting it.

3. Invent an introduction which attracts the attention of the hearers and announces the subject of the exposition.

4. Write an introduction which presents the *scene* of the exposition to the hearer, as in a letter from your home to a Cuban, or a letter written from Labrador.

5. Examine your text-books with reference to the introductory chapter of each. Analyze them to see what purpose they serve.

6. Read an essay by Lamb, Emerson, or Burroughs, with reference to the conclusion. Show in what this consists.

7. Suggest appropriate conclusions for three of the expositions under Oral Exercises (p. 200).

8. Find in your library an example of scientific exposition, and note the conclusion.

Transition and Coherence (pp. 177–180)

1. Explain the game of tennis to a friend who has never played it.

2. Describe the pleasures of skating. Imagine that you are writing to a cousin, in Southern California, who has never learned to skate.

3. Explain to a child how pearls are obtained. Describe the experience of a pearl-diver.

4. Your cousin, who lives in California, writes to you, describing the rainy season there. Reproduce her letter.

Reply, describing a New England winter or a winter in the Middle West.

5. Frank Swift, who has just entered college, writes to a friend at home, describing college life. Reproduce the letter, remembering that the friend has never been at college.

6. Tell what cocoanuts are, where and how they are obtained, and how they are used.

7. Describe the sugar cane and the manufacture of sugar.

8. You live in South Carolina. A cousin in Michigan, who has never been in the South, sends to you for information about rice and rice swamps, for use in her essay. Reply, giving the desired explanation.

9. Where and how is coffee obtained? How is it distributed? How is it used?

10. Explain the construction of a yacht to a friend who has never seen one.

11. Describe a yacht race.

12. Explain the building of a birch canoe. (Read the account in "Hiawatha.")

13. Explain a bear hunt in language that could be understood by a child.

14. Report a day's climbing in the mountains, introducing such explanations as are necessary.

The Use of Examples (p. 180)

I. Explain the following statements, by means of examples: —

1. A man is known by the company he keeps.
2. A rolling stone gathers no moss.
3. Handsome is that handsome does.
4. Many hands make light work.
5. A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches.

II. Explain by examples: —

1. The action of water in river valleys.
2. That fires are usually due to carelessness.
3. That children misunderstand ordinary terms in conversation.
4. What you mean by the word *hero*.
5. Your understanding of *education; telepathy; sleight of hand; tyrant; traitor; coward; magnanimity; tact; usury; cunning; patriotism; business ability; rashness; prudence.*

The Use of Diagrams (p. 185)

In the following exercises, use such sketches and diagrams as are necessary.

1. Explain the construction of a suspension bridge. Draw a diagram to make your essay clear.

2. Explain the phases of the moon, using a diagram. If you do not understand the changes in the appearance of the moon, get an Astronomy, and study the explanation until it seems clear to you.

3. By means of a diagram and a written description, explain the construction of a canal lock. Show how the lock enables a boat to pass to a higher or a lower level.

4. Describe a windmill, using a drawing to make your meaning clear. Refer to the drawing by letters.

5. What is a pulley? How is it used? Explain, using a drawing, a written description, and an illustrative example. Read your exposition to your classmates, and ask them to show how each of these three means of explanation helps the others.

6. Find in a History some description which is made plain by means of a map or diagram. Copy both the description and the diagram, to present to the class. Show how each reinforces the other.

7. What is a watershed? Explain and illustrate by means of a diagram or a map of a region near home.

8. Using both words and drawings, describe the houses of the Eskimos.

9. What is meant by crystallization? Explain the term, giving examples and illustrating by drawings.

10. Describe a lighthouse. Tell what it is intended to do, and then show how it does it.

11. Bring to the class some illustrated piece of writing which you have found in a book or magazine. Show how the pictures illustrate the text, and the text explains the pictures.

12. Explain the action of some mechanical toy. Use a diagram.

Exposition of Character (p. 188)

1. Express as clearly as you can your conception of the character of Moses, in Goldsmith's "Vicar of Wakefield":

Hervé Riel; Dr. Manette, in "A Tale of Two Cities"; Madame Defarge; Ivanhoe; Cedric the Saxon; Enoch Arden; Shylock; Portia; Sir Galahad; Gareth; Ulysses (in Tennyson's "Ulysses").

2. Describe your favorite character in history.

3. Contrast courage and cowardice by the use of illustrations.

4. Compare a thrifty laborer with a ne'er-do-well.

5. Compare the Russian peasant with the American laborer.

6. By what means does Newman make clear the character of a gentleman (p. 399)? Give examples.

7. Write on one of the following subjects, endeavoring to make the character clear: — (1) The Leader of the Gang; (2) The Captain of Industry; (3) The Well-Trained Servant; (4) The Mother; (5) The Early Explorer.

Miscellaneous Exercises

I

Jack, a city boy, ten years old, goes to his grandfather's in the country to spend the summer. He is an observant boy, and asks many questions, among them the following. Answer them clearly, as if you were replying to Jack.

1. What makes the days longer in summer than in winter?
2. Where does the water in the brook come from and where does it go?
3. How do fishes breathe?
4. Why do you drain a swamp, and how do you do it?
5. How do you make butter?
6. How do they make smooth boards out of a tree?
7. How came this ear of corn to be speckled red and white?
8. What is a tedder? What does it do? and how?
9. How do you split a big boulder?
10. What is a toll gate? Are there any now?
11. What is a mortgage? What happens if it is not paid?

II

Imagine that your cousin, a girl of sixteen, whose home is in the country, visits you in the city. You explain to her some of the unfamiliar things in city life, as follows: —

1. How the streets are cleaned, and why.

2. A street-car transfer; what it is; how it looks; when and how it is used.

3. The ferry boat; its use and general appearance.

4. The elevator in a large building.

5. How the house is lighted.

   1. Material means: gas pipes, electric wires, etc.

   2. Supply: through a company; how measured; how regulated.

   3. Compare the advantages of kerosene, gas, and electricity.

6. Explain the use of an automatic public telephone.

7. Explain how your city is governed. (Prepare an outline.)

8. Describe a grain elevator.

9. Compare facilities for obtaining food-stuffs in the city and in the country.

III

From the exercises below pick out a subject that is familiar to you. Prepare an outline; then explain the subject fully, clearly, and in accurate language.

1. What are tides? How are they caused? What is their effect?

2. What is a freshet? What causes it? What are some of the effects of a freshet?

3. I had an orange for breakfast. Where did it come from? How was it grown? How did it get to me?

4. I live in New York. Tell me about the prairies.

5. I live in Ohio. Tell me about the mountains.

6. Kate lives in Nebraska. Tell her about the seashore.

7. John's home is in Maine. Tell him about life in New Orleans.

8. Explain the process of canning fruits and vegetables.

9. How is gold obtained? coined? used? What makes it valuable as coin? in the arts?

10. Chestnuts: what they are; how they look; where they grow; squirrels and chestnuts; boys and chestnuts; a day spent in gathering chestnuts.

11. Raisins: what they are; how they are obtained; how prepared for market; how used.

IV

To explain an idea which is embodied in a visible and tangible shape, as in a wheelbarrow or a steam-engine, is less difficult than to explain the meaning of a word, a scientific term, or an abstract idea. Yet expositions of the latter kind are often required in the ordinary business of life. Training in this variety of composition promotes clearness of thought as well as accuracy of expression.

In the following exercises, try to get a definite idea of the meaning of each term; then express your idea clearly and accurately. Use definitions, and, when you can, give examples from your own experience.

1. What is a noun? How does it differ from a verb? from an adjective?
2. What is meant by the phrase *nominative absolute?*
3. What is the metric system?
4. What is a complex fraction?
5. What are customs? duties?
6. What is meant by the expression "equation of payments"?
7. Explain the rule for finding the area of a rectangle.
8. What is meant by the expression "the survival of the fittest"?
9. Explain the botanical terms used in Sir John Lubbock's description of a regular flower (p. 151).
10. Explain the terms *equator, vernal equinox, longitude, latitude, meridian, parallel, winter solstice, eclipse.*

V

1. Make an outline to show the plan of the exposition in "The Locomotive" (pp. 154–156). Observe the exactness with which statements are made in this exposition. Note the careful use of terms. What effect is secured by such means? Why would a playful or humorous style be inadmissible here?
2. Write, in the simplest possible form, directions for making a smudge. Use the following outline: —

I. Definition.

II. Use of the smudge.

III. Difficulties encountered in making a smudge.

IV. The proper way to make a smudge. (Compare your explanation with that of Dr. Van Dyke.)

3. Make an outline of "The Fertilization of Plants" (p. 151).

4. Point out descriptive words and phrases which clearly picture the conditions of the "Kangaroo Hunt" (pp. 147–148). Describe (*a*) the savage, (*b*) the wives and children, (*c*) the kangaroo, (*d*) the attack.

5. Make an outline of "The Influence of Climate on Manners and Customs" (pp. 149–151). State the subject of each paragraph, and point out the introductory sentences (if there is an introduction), — the examples, — and the conclusion. Show how the various descriptions are necessary to the explanation of the subject. Contrast the style of the exposition with that of Dr. Van Dyke's account of "The Smudge."

VI

Read the following extract from Gilbert White's "Natural History of Selborne." Then write an account of some bird or animal, including an example of its instinct.

In the following instances instinct is perfectly uniform and consistent. There are three creatures, — the squirrel, the field-mouse, and the bird called the nuthatch, — which live much on hazel nuts; and yet they open them each in a different way. The first, after rasping off the small end, splits the shell in two with his long fore teeth, as a man does with his knife; the second nibbles a hole with his teeth, as regular as if drilled with a wimble, and yet so small that one would wonder how the kernel can be extracted through it; while the last picks an irregular ragged hole with his bill: but, as this artist has no paws to hold the nut firm while he pierces it, like an adroit workman he fixes it, as it were in a vice, in some cleft of a tree or in some crevice, when, standing over it, he perforates the stubborn shell.

CHAPTER V

ARGUMENT

ARGUMENT AND EXPOSITION

In many cases there is no substantial difference between argument and exposition; and even in cases where there is a difference, it is still true that **every argument must be founded on an adequate explanation of the subject in hand.**

The main distinction between **exposition** and **argument** is a **difference of purpose.** An exposition aims to impart knowledge or to make a subject clearer. An argument aims to establish or change the opinion of the hearer or reader, or, it may be, to persuade him to act in a particular way. In an argument, we assume a difference of opinion among reasonable men, and endeavor to bring them all over to our own side of the case; in an exposition, we assume that there is only one view of the subject, and set forth that view authoritatively.

Argument seldom occurs in an unmixed form. Exposition and argument run into each other, like exposition and description, or description and narration.[1] Moreover, an extended argument may bring in all the other forms of discourse. A lawyer arguing a case of collision between two ships might **narrate** the events which brought them to the same place, **describe** the channel and islands where the collision occurred and the fog which caused it, and **expound** the set of the tide or currents which made it

[1] See pp. 54, 96–97.

impossible for one ship to keep clear of the other. Thus narration, description, and exposition would all three contribute to the force of his argument.

Lawyers' arguments are in large part expositions. If a lawyer is arguing a case before a jury, he must offer a reasonable and probable theory which will explain all the facts offered in evidence. If he is arguing a point of law before the judges, he tries to explain the law, in its relation to the facts, in such a way that they will see that the right is on his side.

THE PARTS OF AN ARGUMENT

An argument ordinarily consists of three parts, — the **introduction,** the **body of the argument,** and the **conclusion.** Each of these will be fully discussed in its place; at present, however, we must rest content with indicating their main purpose.

The introduction should state the point at issue and define it accurately. Confusion or lack of agreement on the point at issue is extremely common among untrained reasoners. We have all heard men wrangle endlessly over a question when it was clear to any unprejudiced listener that they were really talking about different things. "Ignorance of the point" makes all argument futile. There can be no profitable discussion until the point at issue is cleared up and recognized as such by both parties.

Suppose you are debating the proposition "Manual training should be introduced into all the grades of the public-school system in this town."

It is at once evident that the term *manual training* is open to various interpretations. To one person it suggests "sloyd" and similar exercises; to another it suggests the studies taught in

technical schools where pupils are trained to become engineers and supervisors of mechanical construction; to a third, the instruction given in trade schools; a fourth wonders if you have in mind the instruction of girls as well as of boys. Before you begin to argue, you must, therefore, **define the term** so clearly that everybody will understand the precise meaning which you wish to attach to it.

But the necessity for precaution does not end here. You must take pains to explain that, since you intend to use the term *manual training* in, let us say, the first of the various senses just indicated, you will purposely disregard certain arguments which might properly be urged against the practice of teaching trades to public-school boys, but which have no bearing upon the teaching of sloyd.

Further, manual training, in even your sense of the term, may serve various purposes. You might argue that skill in handling tools is of great practical utility, or you might argue that practice in the use of tools develops certain important intellectual and moral faculties. If your **introduction** makes it clear that you intend to follow, for example, the second of these possible lines of argument and to ignore the first, you have avoided still further the danger of obscuring the main issue and wasting time by arguing beside the point.

As a result of this analysis, — this definition and restriction and exclusion, — your original **proposition** narrows down to the really vital consideration upon which the entire argument directly bears, or, in other words, the **point at issue.** The process by which the point at issue is determined is illustrated by the specimen **introduction** to a brief on pages 221–222.[1] It will be observed that sometimes, as in the case of the argument in favor of taxing signs and posters (p. 256), there are two or more points at issue.

In defining the point at issue a survey of the general subject may be necessary. The introduction is also the place for this. In any case, however, the preliminary

[1] For further illustrations see pp. 249–259.

matter should be as brief as may be, consistently with clearness and a full understanding of what the argument is about.

Having determined the point at issue and made it plain that the decision turns on that point, we should proceed to the **body of the argument.** This should contain an orderly statement of the several facts or considerations on which we rely to prove our contention, with the evidence for each. It should also mention, likewise in proper order, such arguments against our view as we think it wise to notice, with their **refutation.** The refutation should show that the opposing arguments are erroneous or unsupported by evidence, or that they do not apply to the case in hand. Every division of the subject, both in the proof and in the refutation, should be clearly indicated, and transition should receive particular attention.

Finally, there should be a **conclusion.** This should usually be a rapid summing-up of the points that have been made in the body of the argument; for it is particularly important to leave these firmly fixed in the hearer's or reader's mind. The conclusion, like the introduction, should be as brief as is consistent with clearness.

NOTE. — The plan described above is intended merely as a general outline to which most arguments should conform. Special circumstances will of course require this plan to be modified in different ways; for arguments, like other kinds of writing, differ greatly in their scope, contents, and arrangement. Such modifications as are important will be discussed later, each in its place.

The following paragraph from Mr. John Morley's address on "The Study of Literature" affords an excellent illustration of argumentative method in a more or less informal lecture. We have first an introduction; then a statement of the proposition (in effect, — "Literature

is necessary in modern life"); then a short proof; then a short refutation; and finally a conclusion in a single sentence.[1]

Next to this we know that there is a great stir on behalf of technical and commercial education. The special needs of our time and country compel us to pay a particular attention to this subject. Here knowledge is business, and we shall never hold our industrial preëminence, with all that hangs upon that preëminence, unless we push on technical and commercial education with all our might. But there is — and now I come nearer my subject — a third kind of knowledge which, too, in its own way is business. There is the cultivation of the sympathies and imagination, the quickening of the moral sensibilities, and the enlargement of the moral vision. The great need in modern culture, which is scientific in method, rationalistic in spirit, and utilitarian in purpose, is to find some effective agency for cherishing within us the ideal. That is, I take it, the business and function of literature. Literature alone will not make a good citizen; it will not make a good man. History affords too many proofs that scholarship and learning by no means purge men of acrimony, of vanity, of arrogance, of a murderous tenacity about trifles. Mere scholarship and learning and the knowledge of books do not by any means arrest and dissolve all the travelling acids of the human system. Nor would I pretend for a moment that literature can be a substitute for life and action. Burke said, "What is the education of the generality of the world? Reading a parcel of books? No! Restraint and discipline, examples of virtue and justice, these are what form the education of the world." That is profoundly true; it is life that is the great educator. But the parcel of books, if they are well chosen, reconcile us to this discipline; they interpret this virtue and justice; they awaken within us the diviner mind, and rouse us to a consciousness of what is best in others and ourselves.

[1] This paragraph is quoted, not for purposes of dissection, but to illustrate the tone and temper of easy and informal, though highly finished, argumentative writing. The author has succeeded in making his point without forcing the structure of the argument on the reader's notice. The passage is forcible and convincing, without being controversial.

THE BRIEF OF AN ARGUMENT

Since the effect of an argument depends largely on skilful marshalling of the facts and thorough analysis of their bearing on the point at issue, an outline (or **brief**) should generally be drawn up before the actual composition of the argument is begun.

The brief should contain, in the form of a table, a statement of the points which you intend to make, arranged in the order in which they are to be mentioned in the argument. The making of a good brief is more than half the battle. You should therefore construct your brief carefully and revise it untiringly, until you feel sure that it includes, in outline, everything that you wish to say, and that the several points are arranged in the best order.

The following example shows how to draw up a brief:[1]—

The city government should immediately improve the condition of our streets.

INTRODUCTION

I. Both sides admit that the streets of this city are not properly maintained, in that
   A. The main thoroughfares are not paved.
      1. As a result, they are muddy in bad weather.
      2. They are rough at all times.
   B. The gutters are choked with filth and rubbish.

II. Both sides admit that the remedy lies in the hands of the mayor and city council.
   A. The mayor has the power to appoint and remove the superintendent of streets.
   B. The council has power to appropriate money for the purpose.

[1] The practical suggestions already given as to collecting and sifting material and preparing outlines for exposition apply to argument also, and need not be repeated here (see pp. 165–170).

Brief Proper

The city government should take immediate action in the matter: for

Direct Proof

I. The present condition of the streets hinders and obstructs business, for
   A. The delivery of goods to citizens is slow and uncertain. (Cite cases.)
   B. The business of merchants is hampered by the uncertainty of delivery. (Cite cases.)
   C. Merchants are obliged to keep extra horses and to pay out large sums for repairs on harnesses and wagons.

II. The present condition of the streets tends to keep business away from the city, for
   A. It makes the citizens seem shiftless and unprogressive.
   B. The cost of hauling goods to and from factories is excessive.

Refutation

III. The argument that the city cannot afford better streets is unsound; for
   A. The municipal debt is not large. (Cite figures.)
   B. Expenses may be reduced by economy in certain departments. (Cite examples.)
   C. Money thus spent will save money to every one and will bring new business to the town.
   D. Neighboring towns, under the same conditions, have good streets. (Cite examples.)

Conclusion

Since the present condition of the streets adds to the difficulty and expense of conducting business, besides tending to keep new business away from the city, and since it is possible to provide money for the immediate improvement of the streets, the city council should at once make an appropriation for this purpose, and the mayor should see that the superintendent of streets does his duty.

In a brief,[1] each separate point in the introduction and in the body of the argument should be stated in the form of a sentence (or **proposition**). The advantage of this method lies in the greater definiteness of the sentence. When we make a statement, we are more likely to know just what we mean than when we use a phrase. "The streets need cleaning" is far more distinct than "Necessity of cleaning the streets."

The several points should be numbered and lettered as in the example, the principal points with one set of numbers or letters and the subordinate points with another; and this distinction should be brought out still further by the arrangement of the lines on the page. Thus the brief, by its very *shape*, will appeal to the eye, and through that to the mind.

The **conclusion** in the brief should sum up, compactly and clearly, the main points. It may often consist of a single long sentence.

INTRODUCTION IN ARGUMENT

An argument needs an **introduction,** in order that the point at issue may be clearly defined, beyond the possibility of misapprehension.

The **introduction** is, of course, the place for whatever you see fit to say to the audience **before you actually begin to argue.** It is explanatory in its nature, and should therefore be constructed according to the principles of exposition. How long the introduction shall be, and precisely

[1] For other specimen briefs, see pp. 249–259. For an exhaustive discussion of the making of briefs, and of the various processes and aspects of argumentation, see Baker's "Principles of Argumentation" (Ginn & Company). Lamont's edition of Burke's "Speech on Conciliation with America" includes a careful analysis of that speech in the form of a brief.

what shall go into it, will naturally depend on circumstances and on the nature of the subject.

1. It may be useful, or even necessary, to give a short **history of the question** (as in the illustration on page 221), — to tell how it arose, how you come to be discussing it, what its importance is, and how it concerns your hearers. Such preliminary remarks will serve to rouse the attention of your audience, — to bring the question home to them. They may also help to bring out the point at issue more clearly, by putting the whole subject in its proper light and showing its bearing on matters of which your hearers already have some knowledge and in which they feel a personal interest. If, however, your hearers are well informed on the general subject beforehand, and keenly alive to its importance, you should not weary them by a needless preamble.

2. The introduction is also the place for the **statement of admitted facts.** Every discussion involves certain significant matters of fact on which both parties are agreed. These your hearers must have in mind if they are to follow your argument. State them, therefore, clearly and concisely, and make it evident that they are not disputed points.

Here you will have to make a selection between those facts which are really significant and those which are not. Trivial details, and matters that have no bearing on the question, should be ignored. Further, you must distinguish in your own mind between such facts as are familiar to your audience and such as are probably new to them. The former need only be stated; the latter may require to be dwelt on or explained. Finally, you should take care not to bring forward as an admitted fact anything that your opponent is likely to dispute.

3. If there are any terms used in the proposition, or likely to be much used in the argument, which need **definition**, they should, if possible, have their meaning settled in the introduction. Otherwise the point at issue will be uncertain, and the whole discussion may come to nothing. It is useless to argue unless both sides know exactly what they are arguing about.

Many terms which seem on their face to be precise enough, are really too vague or uncertain to be usable in argument. For example, in the proposition, "Responsible government would be advantageous for Russia," the term "responsible government" is ambiguous. Does it mean a ministry responsible to the legislature, like the British ministry, or a ministry responsible to the emperor, as in Germany? Until it is settled which of these two senses the term is to have, there can be no intelligent argument on the proposition. In such a case, the definition of the term is necessary to a clear understanding of the point at issue.

Other examples of terms which are likely to need definition or limitation, are *monarchy, republic, aristocracy, monopoly, trust, socialism, imperialism, temperance, tariff reform, protection, liberal education,* — each of which conveys different ideas to different persons.

4. The introduction should contain a statement of the **proposition** and usually of the side of the case which you intend to support. At the end of the introduction you will naturally state the **point at issue,** for your audience must have it clearly in mind when your real argument begins.

5. Finally, you may need a special paragraph, after you have stated or restated the proposition, in which to set forth briefly the **plan** which you mean to follow in the

argument, — the main divisions of your case, or the several kinds of proof which you intend to bring to its support.

In general, remember that the essential thing in an introduction is to state the point at issue and to define it accurately, so that there can be no possible doubt just what you are trying to prove. There should be no argumentative matter in the introduction.

The following specimen of the **brief of an introduction** illustrates the structure of this part of an argument: —

Manual training should be introduced into all the grades of the public-school system of this town and maintained as a part of the regular course of study.

INTRODUCTION

I. The question has arisen from the following considerations:
   A. During the past thirty years there has gradually developed in the United States a sentiment in favor of systematic training for the young in the mechanic arts. This sentiment appears to have originated in the favorable impression made by the industrial exhibits of certain European schools at the Centennial Exposition in 1876, and to have been fostered by a growing realization of the loss to education which has resulted from the abandonment in this country of the system of trade apprenticeship by indenture. In the last five or six years this sentiment has become such a widespread conviction, that more than two-thirds of the towns in the United States having a population of 8000 or over now give manual training a place in some part of the school system [1]
   B. The citizens of any prosperous town, such as ours, which has not yet introduced this subject into the public schools, ought carefully to investigate the alleged advantages of manual training, then, with a view to the possible improvement of their own school system.

[1] Report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education for 1904.

II. The term "manual training" requires definition.
In order to narrow the discussion we shall consider only the needs of boys, although the greater part of our argument would apply equally well to the needs of girls. By "manual training" we mean instruction in wood-working, metal-working, or leather-working, together with other simple mechanical arts requiring some dexterity (such as basket-weaving), adapted to the ability of boys attending the various grades of the public schools, from the lowest to the highest.

III. In arguing for the introduction of manual training, we shall have in mind only one of the various purposes which such training might serve, i.e. the so-called "cultural" purpose, — the development of certain important intellectual and moral faculties.

IV. We shall exclude from this discussion, then, any consideration of so-called trade-schools or technical schools, maintained as separate institutions for the training of engineers or artisans.

V. We shall not urge the practical advantage of knowing how to use common tools, though even our opponents will admit the usefulness of this accomplishment.

VI. Some of the commonest arguments against manual training, which are based upon the idea that its primary object is to teach a boy a trade by means of which he may obtain a livelihood, are accordingly ruled out as extraneous. Such objections are the following: —

A. The public schools should devote themselves exclusively to a type of education which broadens the mind and develops the reasoning powers — not to the training of mechanics.

B. The introduction of manual training forces the child to choose a trade or a definite field of labor when he is too young to make such a choice wisely.

C. By teaching a trade, manual training commits the child to the career of a mechanic and thus discourages him from trying to follow a profession.

VII. The point at issue is, therefore: Does a proper regard for the intellectual and moral welfare of the boys attending the public schools in this town make it imperative that

the subjects at present taught should be supplemented, throughout all the grades, by instruction in wood-working, metal-working, and similar mechanic arts?

THE BODY OF AN ARGUMENT

The order in which the points are to be taken up in the **body of the argument** must be settled with care in making the brief. This order should be, so far as possible, that of the **climax,** — that is, the points should be arranged in the order of their strength or importance, ending with the strongest. The reason for such an arrangement is clear enough. One should not imitate the lawyer who said: "And now, having shown that the arguments of the opposing counsel are impossible, I shall proceed to show that they are likewise extremely improbable." When the nature of the proof makes an exact climax impracticable (when, for instance, several points are of equal weight), one should still take care to end with one of the strongest points and to give it due emphasis.[1]

Each point should be treated by itself, and should be so introduced and explained that there can be no doubt about its meaning or its bearing on the case. The paragraphs should be firmly constructed, and the beginning and the end of each should be well marked.

The **transition** from point to point should be emphasized, in order that your readers or hearers may see instantly when you pass on from one to another. In this way they

[1] There is no universal rule of arrangement for the body of an argument. Sometimes it is wise to begin with a particularly strong or telling point, especially when the audience is indifferent or hostile. Such a point, however, should not be immediately followed by one that is noticeably weaker, or the speaker may lose more than he gains. If the whole argument cannot be arranged on the principal of the climax, the last three or four points may be so arranged. In any case, the summing up in the conclusion may observe this principle.

will be able to keep the different points separate in their minds and will therefore understand their force more clearly and remember them better. Neglect of transition is sure to confuse your audience, and thus they may miss some of your most important reasoning.[1]

In an argument of any length, each of the main points may have to be divided into several subordinate points (as shown in the briefs, pp. 217, 249). In this case, you should take the utmost care to keep the structure of the argument clearly before the reader's mind. You have to deal not only with single paragraphs that are units, but with the grouping of those paragraphs into larger divisions which shall also be units. Using your brief as a guide, you should keep the subordinate points distinct from each other, and should show, by firmly compacted paragraphs and by transition, their relation to each other and to the main point under which they come.

The beginning and the end of each of the larger divisions of your argument should be plainly indicated. With this in view, you may perhaps find it necessary, when taking up one of your main points, to mention the divisions you intend to make. So, when you are about to pass from one of these divisions to the next, you will often find it necessary to sum up what you have said, in order that the several subordinate points under that head may be clearly in the reader's mind before you go on to the next head.

One of the important points in Burke's "Speech on Conciliation" is the Spirit of Liberty in America.[2] He introduces this point by a paragraph emphasizing the existence of this spirit and stating that it has several causes, which he intends to set forth.

[1] For methods of transition, see pp. 285 ff.

[2] See Lamont's edition, pp. 19 ff.

He then enumerates and explains these causes, devoting a paragraph or two to each. Then, in a single short paragraph, he sums up what he has said on this topic as follows :—

Then, sir, from these six capital sources: of descent, of form of government, of religion in the northern provinces, of manners in the southern, of education, of the remoteness of situation from the first mover of government, — from all these causes a fierce spirit of liberty has grown up. It has grown with the growth of the people in your colonies, and increased with the increase of their wealth: a spirit that, unhappily meeting with an exercise of power in England which, however lawful, is not reconcilable to any ideas of liberty, much less with theirs, has kindled this flame that is ready to consume us.

The place of the **refutation** in the body of the argument will depend on the nature of the question, on the character of the evidence, and on circumstances. We shall therefore discuss this subject in a special section (p. 237, below).

Each point in the argument should be supported by **proof**, that is, by facts or considerations which shall tend to convince the reader of its truth.

The nature of the proof will of course depend on the nature of the point at issue and on particular circumstances. It will not be the same for every kind of question. Therefore, to understand the various kinds of proof, we must discuss the main classes of arguments.

THREE KINDS OF ARGUMENT

Arguments may be divided into three main classes, according to the nature of the questions with which they deal: (1) **arguments of fact**, (2) **arguments of theory or principle**, and (3) **arguments of policy**.

I. An **argument of fact** aims to establish or disprove an assertion as to a definite occurrence or state of things.

Thus the following propositions might be argued, *pro* and *con*, as questions of concrete fact: —

The Allerton Bank was robbed by Thomas Ackers on March 3, 1906.

King Alfred was born in the year 848.

The Trojan War actually took place.

Richard Roe paid John Doe five hundred dollars on the tenth of last April.

Gunpowder was invented by the Chinese.

An argument of fact is commonly addressed to persons who are assumed to be impartial. It appeals to their reason and common sense, not to their interests or prejudices. It deals with concrete questions of human knowledge and experience, which, if there is evidence enough available, may always be determined beyond a reasonable doubt.

II. An **argument of theory or principle,** like an argument of fact, is addressed to the reason of its audience and not to their feelings or interests. Unlike an argument of fact, however, it aims to establish or disprove, not a concrete matter of human experience, but either a general law or principle which explains a large body of isolated facts, or the applicability of such a law or principle to the facts in question. Propositions of this kind are the following: —

The earth and the other planets revolve round the sun as a centre. (The Copernican System of astronomy.)

The sun and the planets revolve round the earth as a centre. (The Ptolemaic System of astronomy.)

Matter consists of molecules which are composed of atoms.

The change of seasons depends on the inclination of the earth.

All questions of scientific and philosophical theory come under this same head, and so do questions involving the applicability of some legal principle to an admitted body

of facts. Arguments of theory, however abundant the evidence, are seldom capable of deciding the question beyond the possibility of doubt. At times, however, so strong a probability may be established on one side or the other that sensible men regard the discussion as definitely settled. In legal questions, the final determination is made by the highest court.

III. An **argument of policy** differs from an argument of fact or of theory in that it aims, not to establish or disprove a fact or a principle, but to persuade the person to whom it is addressed to act in accordance with the belief or the wishes of the speaker or writer.

The following are examples of questions which might produce such arguments: —

Shall the United Street Railway Company receive permission to lay a double track in Preston Avenue?

Shall the practice of coaching from the side-lines be forbidden in amateur baseball?

Shall the law protecting song birds be strictly enforced?

Shall the United States withdraw from the Philippine Islands?

Having briefly defined and illustrated these three classes of arguments, we shall now take up each class separately in greater detail and with special reference to the kind of **proof** which may be offered in each.

ARGUMENTS OF FACT

An **argument of fact,** as we have seen, usually aims to prove that a definite occurrence did or did not take place, and this it can do only by citing other facts as proof. In such cases, it is often possible to reach a conclusion with which a reasonable man cannot disagree, and this would

always be possible if all the facts could be discovered. In other words, arguments of fact are based on **evidence.**

Evidence may be either **direct** or **indirect.**

If a man is arrested for attempting to rob a bank, the testimony of a policeman that he caught him drilling holes in the safe is **direct evidence.** The fact that the defendant was seen to run from the building, that the safe was blown open, and that near it lay a coat belonging to the defendant is **indirect** (or circumstantial) **evidence.**

Direct evidence is not always conclusive. In the case of the bank robbery, for example, the policeman's testimony might be discredited, if it could be shown that he was a notorious liar or that he owed the defendant a grudge. If a witness is to be believed, he must have a good reputation for veracity and must be unprejudiced. So, too, a witness may be too stupid to observe accurately, or to remember distinctly what he has observed. When, as often happens, two witnesses contradict each other, the jury has to decide which of them is telling the truth. If direct evidence is of a documentary nature, its force would be destroyed by showing that the letter or paper in question is a forgery.

In an argument which draws its evidence from books, the authors cited should be such as have a good reputation for fair-mindedness and accuracy, as well as for knowledge of the subject. A violent partisan, however honest his intentions, cannot be expected to write an impartial history; his prejudices will inevitably lead him to color and misinterpret the facts, even when he does not actually distort them.

On the other hand, the word of a liar may be taken if he is testifying against his own interests; and, in like manner, the statements of a prejudiced writer will have

great weight when he records facts that are to the disadvantage of his own party or to the advantage of the opposite side.

Where direct evidence is not attainable or is insufficient, we must fall back on **indirect** or **circumstantial** evidence; and if there is enough of this we may reach as great certainty as if we had direct evidence.

Indirect evidence may tend to establish a fact either (1) by **antecedent probability** or (2) by **sign.**

1. An **argument from antecedent probability**[1] depends on facts which tend to show that the occurrence in question was likely to happen.

Thus, the fact that a man was a professional burglar might tend to make it probable that he had committed a particular burglary; so also his possession of burglar's tools and his being in great need of money.

In Macaulay's attempt to prove that the "Letters of Junius" were written by Sir Philip Francis, he shows that both Junius and Francis resented the appointment of Chamier and that both were bound by a strong tie to Lord Holland. These are arguments from antecedent probability, for they tend to make it probable that Francis would have expressed himself as Junius did.

In the famous case of Aaron Burr, the fact that Burr's fortune was involved and his political prospects destroyed tended to prove that he was likely to commit treasonable acts in the hope of improving his condition.

An argument from antecedent probability must always be supported by other evidence. In itself, no matter how strong a probability it establishes, it is not sufficient to make a proof.

Thus, in the Junius case, Francis was not the only Englishman who resented Chamier's appointment and who was bound by strong ties to Lord Holland. Similarly, — to pass to Burr's case, —

[1] Called also an "argument *a priori*."

everybody knows that a ruined politician does not necessarily, or even usually, plot treason to retrieve his fortunes. And, even when the probability that a man would act in a certain way under given circumstances is very strong, still it never amounts to a certainty; for men do not always act as we should think they would.

2. An **argument from sign** is based on facts which indicate that the occurrence did actually happen in the manner alleged.

Thus, in a case of bank robbery, evidence that the prisoner was seen running away from the building and that his coat was found near the broken safe would be grounds for an **argument from sign**; for such facts point to his being the robber.

In the Junius case, Macaulay's first three "marks" — that both Junius and Francis were well acquainted with the technical forms of the Secretary of State's office, with the business of the War Office, and with the debates in the House of Lords — are arguments from sign.

So, in a certain murder case, the fact that a knife which would fit the wounds was found, along with property belonging to the victim, in the possession of the defendant, and the fact that it had been broken, and partly defaced by filing, were arguments from sign, since they were circumstances that indicated that he was the murderer.

Circumstantial evidence, if there is enough of it, may establish a practically conclusive proof. For, though each circumstance, taken singly, may perhaps be interpreted in two or three ways, yet the whole chain of circumstances, taken together, may admit of but one reasonable explanation. The effective use of such evidence in an argument depends, therefore, on the skill with which the separate facts are combined and arranged so as to bring out their probable significance as a whole.

The facts which are used as circumstantial evidence — like those which constitute direct evidence — must be

proved by testimony; and what has already been said of the credibility of witnesses (p. 228) applies to evidence of both kinds.

ARGUMENTS OF THEORY OR PRINCIPLE

Arguments of theory or principle aim to establish the best explanation of great masses of facts; or, if the principle is already known, to show that a given case comes under that principle. Such an argument may closely resemble an **exposition**; for, to establish the theory, or to decide on the principle that applies, we must canvass all the relevant facts and show that they are satisfactorily explained and harmonized by the theory.

Questions of **scientific theory** come under this head, for such a theory professes to afford the best explanation possible at the time for all known facts bearing on the subject under discussion. Since new facts are always being discovered, new theories must continually be formed, and each generation of scientific men must deal with a new set of arguments. The discovery of radium and its wonderful properties has upset many theories which were supposed to be ultimate truths of nature. Still, in every department of science there are certain theories which explain so large a proportion of the phenomena that they are accepted as true and confidently used as the basis for further investigation. Such a theory is the Copernican theory of astronomy. Nobody *knows* that it is true; but it passes for an established fact.

Arguments of theory are necessary at every new step in science; for scientific progress consists not merely in discovering and recording facts, but in offering an adequate explanation for them.

Such an argument on a scientific question usually begins by showing that the theory now accepted either leaves unexplained certain facts already known, or that certain new facts can find no place under it.

A case in point is Agassiz's theory that great continental glaciers extended, in a former age, far south over both Europe and America. Before Agassiz propounded this theory, the occurrence of boulders, and of scratches on the rounded surfaces of ledges, was ascribed to the action of icebergs carrying rocks, and it was assumed that the regions where these phenomena had been observed were once covered by the sea. Agassiz pointed out that the same phenomena are to be seen in Switzerland, where glaciers are still active, and where the iceberg theory can hardly apply. He showed further that the hills and fields of gravel found in the same regions as the boulders and rock scratches could also be explained as the moraines or débris heaps of former glaciers. Thus he brought together new facts which made a new theory necessary.

In arguments on scientific theory, it is often necessary, either at the outset or in the course of the discussion, to prove that certain "facts" on which former theories have relied are not facts but mistakes. Thus an argument of fact (p. 227) may be combined with an argument of theory.

When a body of facts may be explained by either of two scientific theories, that one which accounts for them in the simpler and more reasonable way is preferred.

Thus, the Ptolemaic theory of astronomy (which held that the earth is the centre of our system) and the Copernican theory (which held that the sun is the centre) both accounted for the motions of the heavenly bodies. The Copernican theory, however, provided a far simpler explanation than the Ptolemaic, and has accordingly been universally accepted.

Arguments on questions of law before a judge are arguments of theory; for the facts are already established, and the question is, "What principle of law applies to them?"

In the nineteenth century, the courts of New Hampshire were required to pass upon the right of a mill owner to erect a dam and thus to flow lands bordering on a pond or river. The case had to be decided on one of two principles. On the one hand, there was the right of every man to control and protect his own property; on the other, the "right of eminent domain," by which the state, whenever the maintenance of the right of private property interferes with improvements of marked public benefit, steps in, and, with due compensation, overrules the claims of the private owner. The court decided that, since the interests of the community called for the building of dams and mills, the right of the shore owners to keep their fields unflooded must give way. Here all the facts were agreed upon, and the arguments dealt merely with the question which principle of law was applicable to them.

ARGUMENTS OF POLICY

An **argument of policy**, as we have seen (p. 227), aims to persuade those to whom it is addressed to act in accordance with the belief or the wishes of the speaker or writer.

NOTE. — It is also an argument of policy when we try to settle the question whether certain acts *in the past* were right or expedient. Thus Macaulay, in his "Essay on Milton," enters into a long argument on Milton's political conduct. "The public conduct of Milton," he says, "must be approved or condemned according as the resistance of the people to Charles the First shall appear to be justifiable or criminal." An argument of this kind differs from ordinary arguments of policy in one point alone: it does not aim to induce anybody to act in accordance with our belief or wishes.

The **argument of policy** is the commonest of the three classes of argument. Every one of us is continually called upon to decide, for himself or with others, the question whether it is right or expedient to perform a given act. On such occasions, we always weigh the *pros* and *cons* and thus, whether we know it or not, engage in an argument of policy. Almost as frequently we try to persuade

some one else to agree with us, and thus the argument takes definite form.

Arguments of policy may be conveniently divided into two classes, according as they address themselves to the question "Is it **right?**" or the question "Is it **expedient?**"

In a question of **what is right,** the argument must detach the case from the complexities and irrelevant details that obscure the real issue. It must often put aside all consideration of loss or hardship to individuals and apply itself to proving that one course of action is morally right, and that the other is morally wrong. When this moral question is settled, the argument is practically complete. It needs only a conclusion appealing to the hearer's conscience.

In a question of mere **expediency,** we assume that both courses of action are right and maintain merely that one of them is more advantageous than the other. Here we must consider what personal interests are involved. We must show our hearers that the decision which we favor will work to their advantage, — that they will be better off, in some way, if they join our side or act as we wish them to act.

Thus Burke, in arguing against the taxation of the American colonies by Parliament, urged that — whether it was right to tax them or not — it was inexpedient, since more money could be got out of them by free grant than by parliamentary taxation.[1]

Again, the advocates of municipal ownership of waterworks and electric light plants, urge that in this way the community will turn to public uses the profits which now go to private companies; and also that the service will probably be improved. The opponents of municipal ownership urge that the public will suffer by the probable entrance of politics into such business, since

[1] "Speech on Conciliation with America," Lamont's edition, pp. 54–57. Burke is here concerned rather with *legal* than with *moral* right.

experience has shown that in many of our large cities municipal government has been corrupt and extravagant. Thus they hold that in the end the public would pay more and be worse served than under private ownership. Neither party holds that either kind of ownership is wrong in itself.

In practical affairs, these two classes of arguments of policy are often combined. Thus Burke, in his "Speech on Conciliation," undertook to prove that a certain course of action towards the colonies was for the advantage of the whole British Empire, — in other words, that it was **expedient.** But his argument was at the same time an appeal to the conscience of his hearers, since it was plainly the duty of Parliament to adopt his policy if it was really advantageous.

Again, an appeal to **duty** may often be strengthened by showing that the action urged is likewise **expedient.** Theoretically, when a man is once convinced that he **ought** to do a certain thing, he should go about it without demur. In real life, however, we often need to be persuaded that it will be for our advantage to do our duty. And in any mixed assembly there are all grades of consciences, — some of the members will be more influenced by considerations of duty, some by considerations of expediency. It is always proper, in such cases, to show, if we can, that the policy which we are urging is both right and expedient.

Thus arguments in favor of regulating or prohibiting by law the labor of young children in factories, undertake to show not only that it is **inexpedient** for the state to let its future citizens be stunted in mind and body, but also that it is **morally wrong** to allow them to be deprived of the opportunities for due mental and physical development. So again, arguments concerning the policy of this country in dealing with Porto Rico or the Philippines necessarily involve the question, "Is it right?" for we have definite moral obligations toward those islands.

In an argument based on expediency we must not lose sight of the tastes and feelings of our hearers. If they are prejudiced against our cause, we must seek to remove their prejudice by tact and skill in introducing the subject. If they are inclined to favor us, we must take care not to weary them or make them suspicious by unnecessary preliminaries. In either case, we must establish cordial relations with the audience.

We must always put ourselves in the place of our hearers. If we realize how they are likely to feel toward our case, we can the more readily show how the policy that we favor falls in with their interests and how the opposite policy is disadvantageous. Our success in persuading the audience will depend, in great part, on the skill with which we estimate their needs and interpret their feelings.

Arguments in favor of a given policy are supported by citing facts. In some cases these facts must themselves be supported by evidence; in other cases the source from which they are drawn is sufficient authority. In the latter case, it is important to make clear reference to the source, in order that the facts may have due weight. Burke, for example, in his "Speech on Conciliation," introduces certain statistics as follows: —

> I have in my hand two accounts: one a comparative state of the export trade of England to its colonies, as it stood in the year 1704, and as it stood in the year 1772; the other a state of the export trade of this country to its colonies alone, as it stood in 1772, compared with the whole trade of England to all parts of the world (the colonies included) in the year 1704. They are from good vouchers: the latter period from the accounts on your table; the earlier from an original manuscript of Davenant, who first established the Inspector-General's office, which has been ever since his time so abundant a source of parliamentary information.[1]

[1] Lamont's edition, p. 11.

In the same way, when facts are drawn from books, if the source is not instantly recognizable as authoritative, we should briefly explain its character, and in a footnote should insert a reference to the work, mentioning author, title, date, and page.

Arguments of policy are often strengthened by what is called "argument from **authority,**" — that is, by citing the opinions or example of persons whom our hearers respect and admire. In all questions of reform, the opinions of persons of recognized moral force are eagerly sought after. If such a person is known to have made a thorough study of the subject, his authority naturally carries still more weight. The argument for universal arbitration as a substitute for war is strengthened by citing the names of men who have had practical experience in public affairs, for their favorable opinion tends to show that such a reform is not only desirable (which most people would admit) but practicable (which many people deny).

REFUTATION

An argument should not neglect the points made, or likely to be made, by the other side. It should controvert them, discredit them, or show that they are irrelevant. The part of the argument in which this is done is called the **refutation.**

In an **argument of fact,** the refutation may show the impossibility of some fact which is important to the other side.

Thus Lincoln once disproved the testimony of a witness that he saw a certain murder committed by moonlight, by sending for an almanac and pointing out that there was no moon at that time. Similarly, a defendant may be able to prove an *alibi*, that is, to show that he was *somewhere else* when the crime was committed.

If it is not practicable to disprove the testimony of a witness absolutely, its effect may sometimes be weakened or destroyed by showing that he is untrustworthy, either by reason of a poor memory, or because he is stupid or careless or prejudiced or given to lying. This is the chief purpose of cross-examination in trial by jury. The same principles apply in the refutation of alleged facts drawn from books.

Circumstantial evidence may be attacked by showing that the circumstances brought forward are capable of a different interpretation. Thus the fact that a man accused of murder has a pistol in his possession with one chamber discharged, will cease to be significant if it can be proved that he fired at a cat. (Compare p. 230.)

In an **argument of theory,** the refutation may adduce facts that overthrow the opposing theory, or that cannot be explained by it.

Thus, in the proof that the germ of yellow fever is carried by mosquitoes, the refutation of the older theory that it was communicated by contact was made by wrapping volunteers in clothes worn by patients and by showing that none of them caught the disease.

In the Junius case, the inferiority of Francis's acknowledged writings to the Junius letters has been urged as an argument against his identity with Junius. Macaulay refutes this argument by citing the undoubted fact that authors often show similar inequality in their known works.

In the following paragraph, Hazlitt[1] **refutes** the notion that a genius is naturally idle or only fitfully active, by citing examples to the contrary. He closes with an implied challenge to his opponents to produce other instances as good on their side of the question.

[1] In the essay "On Application to Study."

There cannot be a greater contradiction to the common prejudice that "Genius is naturally a truant and a vagabond," than the astonishing and (on the hypothesis) unaccountable number of *chefs-d'œuvre* left behind them by the Old Masters. The stream of their invention supplies the taste of successive generations like a river: they furnish a hundred galleries, and preclude competition not more by the excellence than by the extent of their performances. Take Raphael and Rubens for instance. There are works of theirs in single collections enough to occupy a long and laborious life, and yet their works are spread through all the collections of Europe. They seem to have cost them no more labor than if they "had drawn in their breath and puffed it forth again." But we know that they made drawings, studies, sketches of all the principal of these, with the care and caution of the merest tyros in the art; and they remain equal proofs of their capacity and diligence. The cartoons of Raphael alone might have employed many years, and made a life of illustrious labor, though they look as if they had been struck off at a blow, and are not a tenth part of what he produced in his short but bright career. Titian and Michael Angelo lived longer; but they worked as hard and did as well. Shall we bring in competition with examples like these some trashy caricaturist, or idle dauber, who has no sense of the infinite resources of nature or art, nor consequently any power to employ himself upon them for any length of time or to any purpose, to prove that genius and regular industry are incompatible qualities?

In an **argument of policy,** the refutation may designate particular evils or disadvantages that would result from the policy of the other side; or it may contend that the policy is inconsistent with other well-established principles, that it overlooks important interests, or that it contravenes established rights.

Thus Burke, in his "Speech on Conciliation," shows that England will lose heavily in the way of commerce by continued disagreement with the colonies, and that the revenue from the grants by the colonial assemblies had been greater than the sum raised by taxes imposed by Parliament.[1] He also shows that

[1] Lamont's edition, p. 11.

taxation by Parliament is inconsistent with the policy adopted, with good results, in the cases of Ireland, Wales, Chester, and Durham.[1] And he shows that the Boston Port Bill and the withdrawal of the colonial charters contravene the recognized rights of all Englishmen.[2]

If an argument in favor of small colleges were to assert that a student is in danger of being isolated and forgotten in a large college, the refutation might point out that it is well for a young man to find his place for himself, and that by doing so in college he is better prepared to fight his own way in the world.

The refutation should always be adapted to both the actual and the possible arguments of the other side. **Where** it shall come in, and **how,** must be decided in each case by tact and shrewdness. If we are to be followed by our opponent, it becomes necessary to guess at his arguments, and, under these circumstances, we must be careful not to "give him points." If our opponent precedes, we must not pass over any of his points without attention.

In a short argument, the refutation may stand by itself, all in one place. In this arrangement, the affirmative considerations are likely to come first, in a body, and the negative considerations to follow. In a long argument, however, it is often better to attach to each of the points that we make, a refutation of anything that our opponent has said, or is likely to say, against it. In this way we finish the discussion of each point before we pass to the next, and our refutation is distributed throughout the argument. But all such general principles of arrangement must yield, on occasion, to expediency and effectiveness.[3]

The manner of our refutation will also depend on circumstances. Sometimes it should be formally introduced; at other times it may be brought in casually, as if it were

[1] Lamont's edition, p. 42. [2] P. 58.
[3] See the specimen briefs, pp. 216–217, 249–259.

of slight consequence. Both methods have their peculiar dangers. If we pay too much attention to our opponents, and manifestly attach great importance to their arguments, we may discredit our own case. On the other hand, if we pass by one of their points in silence, or with scant notice, we run the risk of appearing unable to answer it.

In preparing for an argument, we should always read up both sides of the question as thoroughly as possible. This not only ensures greater fairness in treating the subject, but puts us in a better position to support our own case. A strong argument is often fatally injured by failure to refute some specious point urged by the opponent, the weakness of which might easily have been shown if the speaker had known the facts beforehand.

PERSUASION

It follows from the definitions of the three classes of argument (pp. 225–227) that **persuasion** is concerned chiefly with **arguments of policy.** One should be careful in an argument of fact or of theory not to include anything which would unnecessarily antagonize a reader; but, in the main, those arguments assume that the reader is looking for the truth, and that his feelings are not concerned.

An argument of policy, on the other hand, has accomplished only a part of its aim when it has convinced its readers. If it is to have practical results, it must also **move them to action.** Most reasonable men will admit, without much argument, that they *ought* to vote in the "primaries," and that not to do so is to neglect an important public duty. It is quite another thing to persuade an

individual man to go out on a rainy evening after a hard day's work, even when some definite reform is at stake in which he fully believes.

The only way to move most people to action is to **stir their feelings.** We all know what it is to have our reason convinced, and yet to remain indifferent to the whole subject. It is not until our feelings are enlisted that we lose this spirit of indifference and are ready to exert ourselves and make sacrifices in order to carry the matter to a conclusion.

To stir the feelings of our readers by an argument we must use much the same means as in exposition, description, and narration. We must cite specific facts, and, so far as possible, we must enforce the abstract and general by illustrations and examples drawn from the reader's own experience. A man who will be bored by a general appeal in behalf of a society for the prevention of cruelty to animals, will often contribute liberally if we describe specific cases of cruelty which we ourselves have seen.

In practical questions, persuasion depends chiefly on establishing in the minds of the audience a warm and intimate connection between their own interests and the policy we advocate. Whenever we can make a man feel that his personal interests are at stake, we have gained a powerful hold on his feelings and have made a good start towards moving him to action.

Even in a question of policy, however, our arguments should appeal to the reason as well as to the feelings. A demagogue may excite his followers to inconsiderate action by playing upon their emotions, but, in the long run, reason and conscience form the only safe basis for an argument.

In any case, an advocate should keep his temper. If he has confidence in his own side, the tactics of his opponent

will not disturb his serenity. Anger or undue heat is commonly interpreted as indicating a weak case, and is pretty certain to interfere with an effective presentation of the subject.

Finally, we should remember that to be persuasive we must **understand our audience.** An argument on theory or on fact may be addressed to an abstract audience of "reasonable men"; an argument of policy seeks to persuade certain definite persons. Since different people have different interests and different ways of looking at things, each audience requires a different treatment. Here we must exercise tact. We must consider just how far our hearers will listen to a pure reasoning-out of the subject, and just how soon such a treatment of it will bore them. We must know what their prepossessions and prejudices are, and adjust our argument to their feelings.

DEBATES

The most profitable subjects for **debate** are **questions of policy.** Questions of fact commonly need the evidence of witnesses; questions of theory or principle are likely to be too abstruse for most audiences; and neither of these classes of argument affords much opportunity for persuasion. **Questions of policy,** on the other hand, include innumerable questions which are intelligible and interesting to a great variety of persons; and they call into play both the reasoning powers of the debaters and their persuasive skill.

In general, those subjects are the best for debate which lie within the experience of the debaters or touch their actual interests. "Shall the Douma have the powers of Parliament?" and "Shall the House of Lords be abolished?" are, for Americans

purely theoretical questions. Since, then, an American audience can have no share in settling them, their discussion will not give an American debater much chance to practise persuasion. On the other hand, in a school or college debate, a subject like "Shall the rules of football be changed?" has direct and practical interest both for the debaters and for the audience. Persuasion therefore comes into play, and so the speakers are kept on their mettle.

In like manner, questions of local administration are always of immediate interest. "Shall municipal elections hinge on national politics?" must be settled by every town for itself, often on grounds which do not apply to other places. The same is true of many other questions, — such as public or private ownership of waterworks, the maintenance of a park system, "prohibition or local option." Subjects of this kind are well-suited to debate, for they require the application of large principles to very definite local conditions.

Questions for debate should not be too extensive. A school discussion of an hour or two on "tariff or free trade" could deal only in vague generalities and dogmatic statements; it would barely touch the surface. Indeed, such a debate, if it came often, might do the speakers more harm than good. It would encourage the fatal habit of depending on mere assertion as if it were proved fact.

In preparing for a debate, the first thing is to make sure that we have a **debatable question.** To be profitably debatable a question must be one on which reasonable men may differ.

It would be absurd to debate the question whether treason is wicked or not; for no sensible man would take the negative. On the other hand, whether correspondence with rebels in a specific case is treason or not may be a highly debatable question, to be settled both on grounds of public expediency and of law. Again, granted the definition of treason, it was a question of fact, to be determined by evidence and argument, whether Aaron Burr was guilty of certain specific acts that were admittedly treasonable.

Similarly, no one would debate the proposition that unfair play should be ruled out of athletics. On the other hand, how

far a team may properly take advantage of contingencies unprovided for by the rules, is a question which ought to be very thoroughly debated, in order that we may reach right standards in athletics.

Further, questions which turn on personal taste are rarely to be debated with profit. Such are most questions of preference between books and authors, comparisons between different races or nations, between different games, and so on. Indeed, many of the questions on which we argue amicably with our friends furnish poor material for a formal debate.

When we have found a debatable question, we should state it carefully, so that the issue between the **affirmative** and the **negative** is clear. A debate in which one side does not face the other squarely is a waste of time.

"The United States should withdraw from the Philippines" is a vague proposition, on which the negative and the affirmative may never meet; for the affirmative may take it to mean a withdrawal in the distant future, and the negative an immediate withdrawal. Thus the two sides would be arguing different questions. On the other hand, "The United States should withdraw from the Philippines at once," or "as soon as good order is established," would be an excellent subject for debate.

The proposition, "Colleges should not employ *professional* coaches in athletics," is ambiguous; for the word *professional* may be taken to mean a man who makes his living by athletics or it may include a man who, to earn money to complete his education or for some other temporary purpose, takes pay for his services. Again, municipal ownership of street railways may or may not include municipal operation.

The proposition, then, must be so definitely stated that both sides may confront each other squarely **on the same issue, understood in the same way.** In many cases, the mere statement of the issue calls for much thought and a thorough understanding of the subject.

In arranging for a debate, the following order of procedure will be found convenient. The challengers present

three questions to the challenged, who select one of the three. Lots are then cast to decide which party shall take the affirmative and which the negative; or, by previous agreement, the challenged party has its choice. These arrangements are in the interest of a fair debate; for they remove all temptation to propose a question peculiarly advantageous to one's own party.

When the question has been agreed upon and the side which each party is to take has been settled, it is often wise to hold a preliminary meeting, so as to make sure that both parties understand the issue in the same way. Such a conference may even result in an agreement as to certain facts in the case, and these are then to be used freely by either party, without the necessity of proof. The facts agreed on, however, should be carefully stated in writing, in order that no misunderstanding may arise.

Preparation for a debate should be based on wide reading and careful search of the authorities. Well-supported facts are of the utmost importance. Sometimes they are to be obtained from books or magazines; sometimes, and especially in questions of local interest, by personal investigation and enquiry. We should always **study both sides of the question.** It is as necessary to know the weak points in the case of our opponents as it is to know the strong points in our own case. Besides, we must be ready to withstand attack. If we have made thorough preparation, we shall be able to guess pretty accurately what our opponents will urge, both in their direct proof and in their refutation.

The debate is always opened by a speaker on the affirmative side; a negative speaker follows, and so on, by turns.[1]

[1] When there are several speakers on each side, however, the pair who close the debate often appear in reverse order, so that the affirmative has the last word. There is no fixed rule.

When there are two or three speakers on each side, the arguments should be divided among them beforehand. But this adjustment cannot be rigid, for every speaker except the first must adapt his remarks to what his predecessors have said.

The first speaker, who introduces the subject and usually indicates the line of argument which the affirmative means to pursue, may commit his speech to memory if he wishes. The last speaker on each side, who sums up, cannot do this, for obvious reasons. In general, however, all the speakers will make a better impression if they trust somewhat to the inspiration of the moment for the exact words they use.

A debater must not be satisfied with stating his own side of the case; he must be quick to grasp the arguments of his opponents and to meet them in rebuttal. Effective refutation depends in great part on the thoroughness of one's preparation.

In an argument on the retention of the Philippines, if the affirmative should urge the richness of the islands and the opportunities for profitable commerce, the negative might take the ground that the affirmative had not produced figures to prove the richness, and that the people of a tropical climate have few wants for commerce to supply.

The argument for the municipal ownership and operation of street railways drawn from the success of Glasgow has been met by showing that the conditions are widely different, that municipal politics in Glasgow are on a purely business basis, and that the railway mileage is not so large as an American city demands.

Striking facts are very effective in a rebuttal, and readiness to meets one's opponent on his own ground is in itself evidence of the strength of one's own case.

The last speaker on each side should briefly recapitulate the points made both in the direct argument and in the

rebuttal. He should take heed, however, not to dwell too seriously on the arguments of the other side. If he pays them too much attention, he will only fix them more firmly in the minds of his audience. In this way an unskilful disputant may even succeed in arguing against himself. If one ventures to make light of adverse arguments, this should be done with delicacy, and without even the appearance of browbeating or unfairness.

In manner, a debater should be courteous and restrained. He should not shout: a conversational tone is advisable if the audience is not too large, as if one were talking the subject over with one's hearers. A spread-eagle manner will prejudice most audiences and the judicious part of all audiences. One should not haggle over unimportant points. It is better to yield on a trifling matter than to weary the patience of the audience by dwelling on it. Quick judgment as to when to yield and when to insist is of the greatest value to the debater.

Finally, a speaker should always remember that the purpose of debate is to aid in arriving at the truth or the right. He should not take up an argument in a spirit of contentiousness or prejudice. His business is to throw as much light on the subject as he can. Such considerations will relieve him from the uneasy feeling that he is arguing against his conscience when the conditions of a debate force him to support the side which he does not personally favor. Under these circumstances, he is really testing his private opinions by bringing against them what sound arguments he can discover. Thus he helps both himself and his audience to take a less partial view of the whole subject. At the end of the debate he will probably find that his original opinion is much modified. He may even have changed his mind.

SPECIMEN BRIEFS

Five specimen briefs will now be given for study and reference.[1]

I

Should this school adopt the plan of a single long session in place of two short sessions?

BRIEF FOR THE AFFIRMATIVE

Introduction

I. This school has always had two short sessions. (Name the hours.)

II. In the last ten years the town has grown so rapidly that many pupils now come from outlying districts. (Cite the numbers and distances.)

III. Many pupils and parents favor a single long session.

Brief Proper

A single session, lasting from 9 till 2, is better for this school than two short sessions.

Direct Proof

I. A pupil can accomplish more if his time of application is not broken; for

  A. It is easier to keep his attention undistracted by outside affairs.

  B. There is less waste of time in getting settled down to work and in breaking up.

Refutation

II. The assertion that five hours is too long a session for the strength of the pupils is mistaken; for

  A. A healthy boy or girl is perfectly capable of studying for five hours.

[1] It is assumed that, if the pupil had prepared these briefs, he would have cited, wherever it is possible, specific instances which have come to his knowledge. The necessary omission of such examples in the briefs as here printed gives the appearance of mere assertion to some parts of the evidence which might easily be supported by direct testimony.

B. The strain is broken —
By the change of subject from period to period;
By study hours;
By recess;
By drill and gymnastic exercises.
C. Many boys and girls work all day in shops, factories, and offices.

Direct Proof

III. The single session divides the whole day better for the pupil, for
A. The clear afternoon makes possible continuous work on compositions and other long exercises.
B. The pupil has time for athletics or for visiting his friends.
C. It is a better preparation for business, since it accustoms the pupil to longer hours away from home.
IV. The two sessions are an inconvenience to pupils and their parents, for
A. Pupils who live near the school have their time unnecessarily broken up.
B. Pupils from a distance must either hurry to and from luncheon, or else eat a cold luncheon in an uncomfortable place. (Cite cases.)

Conclusion

Therefore, since a single session leaves more time unbroken for study, since it does not cover too long a period for pupils of high-school age, and since it divides the day more sensibly and more conveniently for the pupils, this school should have a single session instead of two.

II

Should this school adopt the plan of a single long session in place of two short sessions?

BRIEF FOR THE NEGATIVE

Introduction

(As in the affirmative argument.)

Brief Proper

One session is not better for this school than two.

Direct Proof

I. The single session of five hours is too long for growing boys and girls to be confined; for
   A. They need relaxation to keep their minds fresh.
   B. They need frequent chances to exercise in the open air.

Refutation

II. The assertion that more work can be accomplished in a single session is mistaken; for
   A. In two shorter sessions the pupil's mind is fresher.
   B. Work can go on at a higher pressure for the shorter session.

III. Little importance should be attached to the assertion that a single session divides the day better for the pupil, for
   A. There is time after school for games and visits.
   B. There are no home lessons that cannot be done in the afternoon and evening.
   C. A pupil should learn to piece together fragments of time for accomplishing longer exercises.
   D. The present arrangement leads the pupil to regard the school hours as the most important part of the day.

Direct Proof

IV. The plan of two sessions better fits the pupil for his work in after life, for
   It approaches the arrangement of time for persons in business.

Conclusion

Since, then, two sessions are better fitted to the mental and bodily conditions of growing boys and girls than one, since as much work can be accomplished in two sessions as in one, and since two sessions inculcate the habit of using the greater part of the day for work, this school should not adopt a single session in place of the customary two sessions.

III

Should final examinations be retained in this school?

BRIEF FOR THE AFFIRMATIVE

Introduction

I. A final examination is a written test of an entire term's work in some study. As a rule, it counts heavily in determining a pupil's standing.

II. Both sides admit that the final examination subjects the nervous pupil to a strain upon mind and body.

III. Both sides admit that it does not determine the pupil's proficiency with absolute certainty.

IV. The question at issue is: Are final examinations of sufficient value, in spite of their inadequacy as a conclusive measure of ability, and in spite of the physical and mental strain they sometimes involve, to warrant their continuance in this school?

Brief Proper

I. The final examination is useful to the pupil, for

A. It is in some ways a fairer test than a series of recitations, for

1. In a final examination all pupils have a more nearly equal opportunity, for

All pupils have to answer the same questions, whereas, in a series of recitations, on the other hand, one pupil may by accident have to answer questions which, in the aggregate, are harder than those given to another pupil; or all members of the class may not have the same opportunity to recite.

2. The pupil has more time to think out and revise his answers than the recitation gives him.

3. Though it may be objected that it is unfair that a single faulty examination paper, written, it may be, under particularly unfavorable conditions, should lower the standing of a pupil who has recited well all through the term, yet

3′. A fair-minded teacher is always on his guard against doing the pupil such a manifest injustice.

B. The objection that the final examination encourages "cramming" is not a serious one, for

1. Intelligent "cramming" (by which we mean a rapid review) is not an evil, for

a. In making a rapid review of a study, the pupil usually acquires a clearer knowledge of the subject as a whole than he had before, and

b. The ability to master and set forth a large amount of special information at short notice is often of great service in after life. Moreover,

2. A pupil can, if he chooses, study any subject in such a way that he does not need to "cram" at the end of the term.

II. The final examination is useful to the teacher, for

A. It affords him his best opportunity for learning, without waste of time, how firm a grasp each pupil has on the subject as a whole.

B. Little weight should be given to the objection that the examination shows the teacher merely how much the pupil is able to remember for a few hours, for

1. No conceivable test can show how much the pupil will remember through life.

2. The skill with which the pupil sets forth information he has acquired even for the time being gives the teacher an idea of his ability to grasp the essentials of a subject and to apply general principles.

C. The teacher acquires information which enables him to improve his instruction, for

He will naturally try thereafter to present more clearly those parts of the subject in which the pupils as a whole do poorly.

D. The examination serves as a means of correcting or confirming the impressions the teacher has already gained from recitations.

E. The fact that the final examination has for so many years been almost universally considered essential to effective teaching is good evidence as to its usefulness.

Conclusion

I. We have shown that the final examination is of service to the pupil, in that
   A. It is in some ways a fairer test of the pupil's standing in class than a series of recitations.
   B. It compels the pupil to review carefully, though not necessarily to "cram" at the end of the term.
   C. It gives the pupil valuable practice in effectively presenting information at short notice.

II. We have also made it clear that the final examination is of service to the teacher in that
   A. It affords a kind of evidence of the pupil's proficiency which the recitation does not give.
   B. It enables him to correct defects in his teaching.

III. We have pointed out, furthermore, that the final examination has stood the test of many years of almost universal use.

IV. We conclude, therefore, that the present system of final examinations should be retained in this school.

IV

Should final examinations be retained in this school?

BRIEF FOR THE NEGATIVE

Introduction

(As in the Brief for the Affirmative.)

Brief Proper

I. The final examination works injury to the pupil, for
   A. The altogether disproportionate degree of importance which it assumes in the pupil's mind is injurious, for
      1. The pupil is almost sure to study for the purpose, primarily, of passing the examination, — not with the idea of acquiring information.
      2. The thought of the impending examination lessens the pupil's enjoyment of his work.

3. The examination hour is felt to be such a critical period that a pupil often fails to do himself justice at this time.
4. When the examination is passed, the pupil is apt to think that he needs to give no further attention to the subject.

B. It is almost certain to result in harmful "cramming," for
The contention that the examination compels the pupil to make a helpful rapid review is not sound, for
The review is made under such a strain and so rapidly that the pupil commonly does not take time thoroughly to digest his facts, for
Every teacher can furnish evidence in proof.

C. It establishes a false standard of proficiency, for
In after life the accuracy and fullness of our information is subjected to far different tests from that of the written examination.

II. The final examination is of no special advantage to the teacher, for

A. It usually confirms his impressions instead of correcting them, for
Any teacher will tell you that he commonly knows before the examination whether a given pupil is likely to pass or not.

B. If the examination fails to confirm the teacher's impressions, he is still likely to attach greater importance to these impressions than to the results of the examination, for
A teacher has more confidence in the impressions received from repeated personal contact in class than in the results of a single examination, given at best under unfavorable conditions.

C. The objection that the present system of examinations has stood the test of several years is not important, for
1. There have always been protests against the system, and
2. It has been retained rather as a matter of convenience than of strict necessity.

D. The objection that the final examination helps the teacher to improve his instruction is not important, for
The daily recitations give him the same opportunity.

III. Whatever advantages the final examination affords, either to teacher or to pupil, may be gained during the term by frequent oral or written tests which, in the aggregate, will furnish a far more reliable basis than the final examination for determining the student's standing.

Conclusion

I. We have shown that the final examination has the following defects:
   A. It worries and in various ways hampers the pupil.
   B. It furnishes the teacher with evidence which is less trustworthy than that obtained from other sources.
   C. It serves no useful purpose which could not be better accomplished by other kinds of tests.

II. We conclude, therefore, that the final examination should be abolished in this school.

V

This town should control and tax the fixed out-of-door advertisements displayed within its limits.

Introduction

I. Out-of-door signs and posters have of late increased so rapidly in this town, and the method of display has become, in the opinion of many, so objectionable, that our citizens are beginning to protest. We refer to the painted or printed announcements, often accompanied by pictures, which are spread upon the outside walls and the roofs of buildings, and on fences, hoardings, and bill-boards.

II. Assuming, for the moment, that a protest is justified, we believe that a reform could be accomplished if the town would undertake (1) to decide where and in what manner out-of-door announcements shall be displayed; (2) to collect a tax of so much a square foot upon all signs and advertisements of more than a certain area. The exempt area should be large enough to permit a man to erect an appropriate sign, without taxation, at his place of business,

but we shall not at this time consider such details as its precise limitations or the rate of taxation.

III. There are two questions at issue, then, both of which we shall endeavor to answer convincingly in the affirmative:

A. Are the announcements to which we have alluded really objectionable?

B. If they are objectionable, would the remedy we have suggested prove effective?

Brief Proper

I. The citizens are justified in protesting against the kind of advertising now permitted in our streets, for

A. These advertisements tend to degrade the public taste, for

1. They are usually inartistic.
2. They are so distributed that they sometimes disfigure buildings which are architecturally pleasing, and often destroy the natural beauty of parks, commons, and other unoccupied spots.
3. In localities where they might appropriately be exhibited, they are often so huge and so numerous that they offend the eye.

B. They tend to degrade the public morals, particularly the morals of the young, for

1. The things which they advertise are sometimes harmful morally, and
2. The manner of presentation — particularly by the use of pictures — is sometimes objectionable, even where there is nothing morally wrong about the article advertised.

II. The community would be benefitted if the town were to assume control of out-of-door advertising, for

A. Such advertising could be restricted to appropriate places.

B. Advertisements offensive to either the artistic or the moral sense could be forbidden.

C. The tax would reduce the number and the size of advertisements.

D. The tax would add to the revenue of the town.

III. Although people who advertise in the manner described, together with the sign-painters, bill-posters, and other workmen who display the advertisements, and the property-owners who obtain rental from this source, will all naturally object that the reform here proposed would interfere with their means of livelihood, yet this objection should not hold, for

A. Most of the inhabitants of this town are not concerned, directly or indirectly, in the business of advertising, and

B. The rights of the many should not be sacrificed for the benefit of the few. Furthermore,

C. The large proportion of advertisers whose business plants are situated, not here but in other towns, ought justly to pay a tax, for

Their business benefits other communities far more than it does ours.

D. Even those advertisers whose factories are situated in our town should pay a tax, for

Such a compensation would be in the nature of proper damages, for

A conspicuous advertisement in a public place forces itself upon the attention of every passer-by in such a way that he cannot escape it, even though he may resent it.

E. Advertisers who object to the tax may use other methods of advertising which are less objectionable and are at the same time profitable.

IV. The experience of other communities has shown that our suggestions are practicable, for

A. Various European cities — notably Paris and Berlin — have introduced such restrictions without difficulty and with entire success.[1]

B. Certain cities in our own country, — for example, Buffalo, Rochester, Cincinnati, and Chicago, — have been benefitted by steps which they have taken in the direction of the reform we advocate.[1]

[1] See Sylvester Baxter in "The Century" for January, 1907.

Conclusion

I. The methods employed in the display of out-of-door advertisements in this town have become so offensive to the artistic and moral sense of the community, that a reform is demanded.

II. If the town would assume control, by censorship and taxation, of this kind of advertising, — a method of restriction which has been successfully employed in other communities, — the abuses would disappear and our citizens would profit in various ways.

Note. — Observe that in the specimen briefs the point which the writer wishes to prove — even if it is merely a subordinate point — is always followed by the proof, and the connecting link is the word "for." This order, — proposition followed by proof, — must be strictly maintained throughout your brief if you wish to avoid confusion. When you are in doubt as to the proper order of two consecutive headings, one of which proves the other, test them by a conjunction. If you can use "for," you are safe; if you have to use "therefore," or "consequently," you must reverse the order of your two headings.

Further, observe that the "for" must introduce actual proof, — not merely explanation. In the first of the following examples the second statement does not prove the first; but in the second example, the "for" introduces actual proof:

[Wrong way]

Senator Williams left the hall before five o'clock, for
He had a headache.

[Right way]

Senator Williams left the hall before five o'clock, for
At three minutes before five, Robert Wheeler saw him walking toward the railway station.

Bear in mind that these instructions apply only to the brief proper, not to the introduction. Since you do not argue in the introduction, but merely clear the way for the argument, the various headings and subheadings in the introduction do not stand in the relation of proposition and proof. In order to escape confusion, then, it is best to avoid altogether the use of "for" in connecting the headings in your introduction.

EXERCISES IN ARGUMENT

Exposition and Persuasion

1. You are visiting your cousin, who lives on a farm in the country. The adjoining farm is for sale. Write to your father, who lives in New York City, describing the farm and urging him to buy it. Explain (1) why it is a good investment; (2) how it could be made an attractive summer place; (3) why you desire its purchase.

2. You have planned to spend next summer in a business office. Your uncle, who is going to Europe, asks you to go with him. Write to your parents, telling them of your uncle's invitation and urging them to consent.

3. You are much interested in the study of birds. Write to a friend, urging her to begin the study. Describe the manner in which you became interested; tell her what equipment is necessary, how and when she can begin the study, and why it will be profitable to her.

4. Write a note to a cousin who is to spend the summer with you, asking him to join with you in buying a boat. Give adequate reasons for the purchase.

5. Your parents are planning a summer vacation and suggest either the seashore or a mountain camp. Write to them, expressing your choice and giving reasons. Try to persuade them that one plan is better than the other.

6. Your uncle promises you a year of study or a year of travel. Your sister writes, urging you to choose the year of travel. Reproduce her letter.

7. Write to your aunt in the country, urging her to spend the winter with you in the city. Show her that it will be pleasant for her and agreeable to your family.

8. A friend is hesitating between two schools. Write to him, trying to persuade him that your school is the more desirable.

9. Suppose that the principal of your school requests you to write a letter to the school committee or the superintendent of schools, asking for a change in the paper supplied for compositions. You have hitherto been supplied with paper in double sheets, but it is thought that single sheets, to be bound together by clips

or paper-fasteners, will be more convenient. In such a letter it would not be enough merely to state that you want another kind of paper. You must also explain why the paper you now have is inconvenient, and why the new paper will be such an improvement as to make the change worth while. Be sure that you make the school committee or the superintendent understand the new way of keeping the compositions.

Argument and Persuasion

Subjects for letters, for debate, or for extempore speech.[1]

Note. — Speaking extempore is a profitable exercise. Let each student write his name upon a slip of paper, and a topic or question involving explanation or argument upon another slip. Put the names of the students in one box, the subjects in another. The teacher or a selected student should draw a subject and read it to the class, and then, after a moment's pause to give opportunity for thought, should draw the name of a student. This student should then be required to speak for two minutes on the subject in hand.

1. You are deciding upon your course of study in a school in which all the subjects are elective. Give reasons for choosing or omitting English composition; algebra; Latin; physics.

2. Show by examples that a person's manner of speech betrays or does not betray lack of education.

3. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals is doing a necessary and benevolent work. Show reasons for the existence of the society. Show the effect of the society upon the standards of the community. Give examples to prove that the work is both useful and benevolent.

4. Children should be taught to respect public property. Why? How?

5. A city of separate houses is better than a city of tenements. Give your reasons for believing this to be true.

6. Play is just as necessary as work. Show the effects of all work and no play; of all play and no work. Give examples showing that alternation of the two is the only good plan.

7. Geoffrey Brown wishes to spend the summer at a boys' camp. He is a young student at an academy. He writes to his

[1] Exercises 10–19 are propositions for debate.

father and mother, urging them to let him join the camping party. He tries to persuade them that it would be good for his health, that he can learn much from association with the masters and the other boys, that the money required will be well spent, and that his absence will be in some ways a relief to his parents. (1) Write Geoffrey's first letter, outlining the plan. (2) Write the father's reply, raising objections. (3) Reply to the objections.

8. The town of Raleigh, Missouri, needs a new building for the high school. Some of the townspeople wish to build a cheap temporary structure for immediate needs; others prefer to build for the future, issuing bonds to cover the greater cost of the better building. The subject is discussed in the newspapers. Write an argument for each side. On the one hand, show that it is more economical to build for future needs than to put money into a temporary and inadequate structure. On the other hand, show that debt is demoralizing, that it is better for the children to suffer inconvenience than for the fathers to be burdened with debt, and that future contingencies may demand something different from the present plan.

The material collected for these newspaper articles may afterwards be used in general debate on the subject.

9. Members of the Albion High School wish to organize a literary society which shall hold meetings on Friday afternoons after school. The proposition is to be discussed at a special meeting of the students called for the purpose. Prepare arguments for and against the organization of the society. Some of these arguments may be presented from the students' point of view; others should present the views of the teachers and the parents.

In preparing these arguments cite instances of other societies which have succeeded or have failed; show the advantages of such a voluntary society; state the effect of such associations upon other duties, in school or at home, and consider the expenses attending the organization.

10. Latin should be a prescribed study throughout the high-school course.

11. The science of housekeeping should be prescribed for girls in the high school.

12. Fewer subjects should be taught in this school, and those more thoroughly.

13. Children should be required by law to go to school two years longer than at present.

14. Interscholastic athletics should be encouraged.

15. Receiving pay for taking part in athletic sports should bar the receiver from amateur contests.

16. Members of the Cabinet should have seats, but no vote, in the House of Representatives.

17. The city (or town) government should do more for the support of the public library.

18. United States senators should be elected by popular vote.

19. Wide tires should be required by law on heavy wagons.

Subjects for Argument

1. Military drill should be introduced into this school.

2. Coasting should be permitted in ——— Street.

3. Monday should be made a holiday in this school, in place of Saturday.

4. Separate high schools should not be maintained in this town for boys and for girls.

5. Automobiles should not be allowed in ——— Street.

6. This city should establish free public baths.

7. No immigrant should be allowed to land in this country who cannot read and write some language.

8. This town should provide free text-books for the schools.

9. This school should establish a monthly magazine.

10. The girls' basket-ball team should be allowed to play games in neighboring towns.

11. An electric railway should connect this town with ———.

12. The wearing of birds' plumage for decorative purposes should be forbidden by law.

13. This town should establish a playground on ——— Street.

14. This town should provide free public concerts in the park.

15. Electric flash-light signs should be forbidden by law.

16. A commercial course should be established in our high school.

17. This town should erect a monument in memory of ———.

18. Medical inspectors should be regularly employed in our schools.

19. This school should organize an orchestra.

20. This school should organize a dramatic club.
21. This school should organize a debating society.
22. Mr. ——— should be elected to the office of ———.
23. Street-pianos should not be allowed in this town.
24. The railway grade crossings should be abolished in this town.
25. A rural free delivery post-office route should be established between this town and ———.

BRIEFS

I. Criticise the following extracts from briefs. Point out any faults in either the reasoning or the arrangement. If the fault is one of arrangement, correct it.

1. The present condition of the streets drives business away from the city, for
   A. It makes the citizens seem shiftless and unprogressive.

2. This country needs a navy second to none in the world, for
   A. The defence of our sea-coast, and
   B. The protection of our commerce; hence
      1. The naval appropriation for the coming year should be not less than $100,000,000.

3. Our present navy is large enough, for
   A. My uncle says so, and
      1. He should know, for he followed the sea in his youth.

4. My opponent objects that battleships are a waste of money, for
   A. One battleship costs as much as the equipment of a first-class university, but
      1. In time of war one battleship might save the city of New York from destruction, and
      2. That would mean a saving of property worth hundreds of battleships, therefore
         a. Battleships are not a waste of money.

5. Women should not be allowed to vote, for
   A. They would be just as likely to vote wrong as right, for
      1. They never understand anything about politics, for
         a. They do not read the political news.

6. Women should be allowed to vote, for
   A. They are just as intelligent as men, and
      1. They are often more intelligent.
   B. They have better moral principles than men, consequently
      1. They would vote against bad candidates.
   C. It is unchivalrous to prevent women from voting.

II. Develop from the following material a brief which will fit the Introduction printed on pages 221–223.

Boys who are dull at their books are sometimes very clever with tools.

The introduction of manual training into our schools would give such boys a chance to win the respect of their mates.

Manual training tends to dispel the notion that labor is degrading.

It sharpens the perceptive faculties better than most other studies.

It puts less emphasis on mere memory than most studies now taught in school.

A good memory is very useful, but education should develop other faculties also.

Manual training develops self-reliance.

Since a boy can appreciate the worth of something which he has made with his own hands at the expense of much time and energy, manual training develops in the pupil an appreciation for the real value of property.

Manual training considered as a "cultural study" has the approval of President Eliot, the late President Walker, President Hall, President Butler, Dr. Felix Adler, Superintendent Maxwell, Superintendent Seaver, and other eminent people engaged in educational work.

Drawing can be taught much more effectively in connection with manual training than by itself.

It can be shown that much of the unfavorable criticism of manual training as a "cultural study" is directed against schools in which the subject is badly taught, since the teachers allow the pupils to perform their exercises in a purely automatic way without sufficient use of their reasoning powers. Such a teacher misses the real object of manual training, which is to develop the boy, — not to produce articles of commercial value.

In other schools which have been similarly criticised, the study has not had a fair trial because the time allotted to it is insufficient. Such schools could afford more time, for it is a matter of common belief that many subjects are at present wastefully taught.

Manual training affords the pupil relief from his other studies, to which he returns with his mind refreshed and invigorated.

The report of the United States Commissioner of Education for 1904 shows that in 1890 only 37 city public-school systems had adopted any degree of manual training, that in 1894 the number increased to 95, in 1900 to 169, in 1903 to 322, and in 1904 to 411.

NOTE. — For further material in connection with this subject the student is referred to the following sources: "Discussions in Education," by Francis A. Walker, New York, 1899; "Moral Instruction of Children," by Felix Adler, New York, 1902; J. P. Harney in "Education," May, 1905; L. D. Harvey in "Proceedings of the National Education Association" for 1905; I. E. Clarke in "Monographs on Education in the United States," edited by N. M. Butler, No. 14; "Report of the Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education" for 1904–5; "Report of the Massachusetts Commission on Industrial and Technical Education," Boston, 1906; B. R. Payne in "The School Review," May, 1906 and June, 1906; "A Conference on Manual Training held in Boston," Boston, 1891.

III. Draw up a brief showing that the development of a powerful navy in the United States either would or would not increase the probability of lasting peace. Make use, if you choose, of the following references: — Rear Admiral Frederick Rodgers, U.S.N., in the "Annals of the American Academy," Vol. XXVI; R. P. Hobson in "The Independent," April 5, 1906; W. S. Meriwether in "Harper's Weekly," March 10, 1906; Hon. John D. Long in "The Independent," March 23, 1905.

CHAPTER VI

DRAMA

In studying **narration** we have occasionally drawn examples from the **drama** to illustrate some point or principle. We must now consider the chief characteristics of **dramatic method**, which differs from **narrative method** in several important respects.

In the first place, a dramatist does not, like a narrative writer, **tell a story**; on the contrary, he brings the characters themselves before our eyes and **makes them act and speak** in our presence. We do not hear about the incidents; we see them happen, we listen to what the characters say while they are happening. In other words, a drama is **all action and conversation.** The dramatist never speaks in his own person. He cannot explain anything; he cannot describe anything. Such explanations and descriptions as are needed must be given by the characters themselves in their conversation with each other or in soliloquies. Here we have a fundamental distinction between a drama and a story. In a story, as we have seen, the dialogue *may* contain some explanatory or descriptive matter; in a drama, it *must* contain all of that kind of material which the play affords.[1]

It results from the very nature of the drama that the incidents follow the **order of time** with absolute strictness.

[1] The **stage-directions** may seem to make an exception. These, however, are not seen or heard by the audience. They serve merely to inform the actors what they are to do. Occasionally, as in Shakspere's "Henry V," a Chorus appears in order to furnish necessary explanations.

In a novel, Chapter III, for instance, may record events that happened before the time of Chapter II; for the author can explain, in so many words, that he is going back to previous occurrences. The dramatist has no such privilege, for the audience are actually seeing the incidents happen, and they must see them, of course, in the precise order in which they occur. Any other arrangement would be an absurdity, and would also be utterly confusing.

The dramatist has less space at his disposal than the novelist. His play must be short enough to be acted in about three hours. Hence he must select his material with the greatest care, adopting only such incidents as are best fitted to advance the action and at the same time to characterize the personages. He must therefore reject many good incidents that a novelist might include, and must rely on the imagination of the audience to bridge the unavoidable gaps. In thus selecting and condensing, he must keep the proportions right, so that the whole play may be on the proper scale. This principle of **dramatic condensation,** which applies to both the **action** and the **dialogue,** should always be remembered in reading a drama; otherwise the progress of the plot may seem so rapid as to be unnatural. We should bear in mind that a play is primarily intended for stage presentation, not for leisurely perusal.

The **plot** of a drama must be such that it can be followed easily by an **actual audience.** Hence it must be compacter and simpler than is required in the case of a novel, where explanations and connecting links are freely supplied by the author himself. Every scene must be pertinent, and clearly pertinent, to the development of the plot. Digressions that might be charming in a novel are inadmissible in a drama. **Episodes** are not excluded, but they

must be so closely connected with the main action that they do not distract the spectator's attention.[1] The reason for all these restrictions is plain. If the audience — or any considerable part of the audience — lose the thread for a moment, they may never recover it. They cannot stop to figure the matter out, for the play is moving forward and they have to keep pace with it; nor can they turn back, like the novel-reader, to refresh their memories by consulting a previous chapter. A good drama is intelligible step by step, as it goes on.

Yet there may be a good deal of complication in the plot of a drama. Indeed, many plays have what is called an **underplot,** dealing with the fortunes of certain minor characters. But the connection of the underplot with the principal plot must always be brought out with perfect clearness.

In "The Merchant of Venice," for example, the love story of Lorenzo and Jessica does not stand by itself; it is closely knit to the main action. In "King Lear," the history of Gloster and his sons is not merely a parallel to that of Lear and his daughters; the two are so intimately combined that the ambitious villainy of Edmund is the direct cause of the death of Cordelia and the indirect cause of the death of Lear.

In analyzing the **structure of the drama** we may take **tragedy** as the type, since here the different parts come out more clearly and definitely than in any other kind of dramatic writing.

In the first place, a drama seldom begins at the beginning; it plunges *in medias res,* — into the midst of events. The opening scene introduces us to some of the

[1] Examples of the episode are, in "Julius Cæsar," the attack on Cinna the poet, and the quarrel between Brutus and Cassius; in "Macbeth," the conversation of the Old Man with the lords after the murder; in "Hamlet," the comic interlude of the gravediggers.

characters in lively action or earnest conversation. Thus we get the **setting** and **atmosphere**, as well as some hint of the subject. Then follows an **expository scene**, which gives us what preliminary information we need.

"Julius Cæsar," for instance, begins with a scene in which the plebeians are making holiday to celebrate Cæsar's triumph and the tribunes are rebuking them; the next scene explains the general situation and prepares us for the conspiracy. "Romeo and Juliet" begins with a street row between the servants of the Montagues and those of the Capulets; "Hamlet," with the sentinels watching for the ghost to appear; "Macbeth," with the parting of the Weird Sisters and their agreement to meet Macbeth upon the heath. In each case, an expository scene follows.

As soon as the necessary **exposition** is finished, we come to the scene which contains the **moving cause** of the whole play, — the speech or action which puts into operation the series of events that form the plot.

In "Julius Cæsar," the moving cause is Cassius's urging Brutus to attack Cæsar. In "Macbeth," it is the prophecy of the Weird Sisters; in "Romeo and Juliet," the meeting at Capulet's ball; in "Hamlet," the ghost's revelation of murder.

The **moving cause** incites the hero to action with a definite end in view. From this point he goes on, step by step, each of his acts leading in some way to that which follows, until the **crisis** or **turning-point** is reached. The **turning-point** marks the summit, so to speak, of the hero's efforts. So far he has gone forward in his purposes, and seems to have had control of events.[1] Henceforth, the

[1] Sometimes, as in "Othello," the hero is not represented as controlling events in this way; he is not so much *active* as *acted upon*. Thus the murder of Desdemona, though committed by Othello, is really brought about by Iago's perfidy. Tragedies of this type, however, are comparatively rare.

forces that are hostile to him become more and more powerful until, despite his struggles, the **catastrophe** arrives, bringing with it his downfall and death. Then the play ends as soon as it can; for what follows the catastrophe is only a more or less formal close, like the **conclusion** in a story.[1]

In "Julius Cæsar," the turning-point is the assassination of Cæsar. Until this takes place, Brutus has controlled the situation; after this point, Antony, his enemy, takes the lead; the catastrophe is reached with the death of Brutus after the disastrous battle at Philippi; the conclusion expresses the success of Antony and Octavius, and contains Antony's eloquent tribute to Brutus's character. In "Macbeth," the turning-point is the scene in the witches' cavern, with the prophecies upon which Macbeth henceforth relies. In "Hamlet," it is the killing of Polonius, whom Hamlet takes for the king. In "Romeo and Juliet," it is the death of Tybalt at Romeo's hands.

NOTE. — In some cases there may be well-founded difference of opinion as to the exact turning-point in a drama. Where events follow in rapid succession, we cannot always define the precise moment at which a man's fortunes take a turn for the worse. This difficulty, however, need not disturb us, for neither life nor literature is a theorem in mathematics.

The **turning-point** in a drama should not seem to depend on a merely accidental occurrence. It should consist in some deed of the hero's which is the natural result of his previous actions, and which, like them, grows out of his character. So, also, the **catastrophe** should result naturally from all that has gone before. It should not appear to be the work of blind chance. We must feel that, circumstances being as they were, a person such as we have been observing would not have acted otherwise than the hero has acted, and that his actions could have but one final outcome,— disaster and death. The fact that what appeared to be the greatest or most successful deed of the hero's life is the cause of his ruin, is what makes

[1] See pp. 46–49.

the play properly **tragic,** not the mere fact that he meets his death, or that the stage is drenched with blood in the fifth act.

In what has been said of the inevitability of the catastrophe, it is not implied that tragedy is what we call "fatalistic." The determining cause of everything is not blind fate, but the character of the hero, acting upon events in a certain environment and under certain conditions. It is rather law than fate that rules the action. If a man touches a hot iron, he will be burned, — but we do not call this necessity "fate."

Accidents, too, are not excluded from tragedy; otherwise tragedy would be untrue to life. The accidents, however, should be such as might probably occur, and such as the hero subjected himself to when he adopted a certain course of action.

In one sense, the death of Polonius is an accident; but in another sense, it is the direct outcome of Hamlet's character. One who, like Hamlet, acts suddenly and blindly upon impulse after long delay and deliberation, must expect such accidents to happen. And, in general, if we drive a sword through the arras without knowing who is there, we may be sure that we shall now and then kill the wrong man. There are accidents in "Romeo and Juliet" also, but every one of them can be justified on tragic principles.

The method of the **climax** is even more important in a drama than in a novel. The interest must rise steadily till it reaches its highest pitch at the **catastrophe.** There are, to be sure, certain scenes in every play which mark a rest or lull in the action,[1] — scenes which give information

[1] Such are, in "Macbeth," the conversation between Duncan and Banquo before Macbeth's castle, and the Porter's soliloquy; in "Julius Cæsar," the passage in which Artemidorus reads his letter, and the dialogue between Brutus and Portia.

or serve as connecting links. But these do not diminish or interrupt the **suspense** in which the audience is held.

NOTE. — The **turning-point** of a drama is often called the **climax**, but this is an unfortunate use of terms. The turning-point marks, to be sure, the moment of most intense activity on the hero's part or the culmination of his fortunes ; but it does not mark the highest pitch of the interest. If it did, the latter part of the play would fall flat, and nobody would wait for the end.

A **comedy**, unlike a tragedy, has a happy ending. The turning-point, therefore, marks the moment when the hero's embarrassments or misfortunes are at their height, and the **catastrophe** brings his final deliverance from his troubles.

Thus, in "The Merchant of Venice," the turning-point is Shylock's insistence on the pound of flesh ; the catastrophe is the rescue of Antonio by Portia's shrewdness in interpreting the bond.

Comedies, however, show great variety in form, structure, and plot, and are therefore not so easily analyzed as tragedies. Sometimes the interest of a comedy lies rather in the portrayal of **life** and **manners** than in the story, and in such cases, the plot is of course a subordinate matter. The distinctions as to subject are, in general, those that have already been pointed out in the case of novels and short stories (pp. 75–76).

Part II

PARAGRAPHS, SENTENCES, WORDS

Part II

PARAGRAPHS, SENTENCES, WORDS

INTRODUCTORY

In Part I we have studied the principles of narration, description, exposition, and argument. Our study, however, has dealt chiefly with the general structure of the essay or other piece of writing. We must now turn our attention to matters of detail and consider the rhetorical elements of which every composition is made up, — **paragraphs, sentences,** and **words.**

The principles to be discussed in Part II bear equally on all the forms of discourse, but their precise application depends on the nature of the subject and on the manner in which it is treated.

CHAPTER I

PARAGRAPHS

THE PARAGRAPH IN GENERAL

Every piece of prose of any length is divided into **paragraphs.** In writing and printing, the first line of each paragraph is **indented,** — that is, it begins a little farther to the right than the other lines. A very brief

composition, relating to a single point, is also called a paragraph.

NOTE. — The name *paragraph* comes from two Greek words and means "something written at the side." It was originally applied to the mark ¶, which was put in the margin to call attention to the beginning of a new division of the writing; later the name was transferred to the division itself.

The object of paragraphing is to give notice when a new point (or **topic**) is taken up, and thus to mark the **natural divisions** of the composition. Well-constructed paragraphs correspond to such natural divisions, and therefore assist the reader in following the thought; bad paragraphs, on the contrary, tend to confuse and mislead him. Skilful paragraphing, then, is necessary in every kind of writing, and especially necessary in exposition and argument.

In reporting a conversation, every speech, however short, is usually written or printed as a paragraph. The object of this rule is to make the course of the dialogue instantly clear to the reader's eye. See pages 19 and 38 for examples.

UNITY OF THE PARAGRAPH

Since the object of paragraphing is to mark the natural divisions of a composition, it is evident that each paragraph must deal with a **single thought** or a **group of connected ideas**, and that it should include nothing which is not to the point. In other words, the essential quality of a good paragraph is **unity.**

In the following extract from Ruskin, we might easily give each paragraph a brief title which would indicate its contents. Thus the first paragraph might be entitled, "The Air in the Bird"; the second, "The Voice of the Bird"; the third, "The Plumage of the Bird." It would

also be possible to express the substance of each paragraph in a sentence: (1) "The bird is little more than a drift of the air brought into form by plumes"; (2) "Into the throat of the bird is given the voice of the air"; (3) "Upon the plumes of the bird are put the colors of the air."

THE BIRD

The bird is little more than a drift of the air brought into form by plumes; the air is in all its quills, it breathes through its whole frame and flesh, and glows with air in its flying, like blown flame: it rests upon the air, subdues it, surpasses it, outraces it; — *is* the air, conscious of itself, conquering itself, ruling itself.

Also, into the throat of the bird is given the voice of the air. All that in the wind itself is weak, wild, useless in sweetness, is knit together in its song. As we may imagine the wild form of the cloud closed into the perfect form of the bird's wings, so the wild voice of the cloud into its ordered and commanded voice; unwearied, rippling through the clear heaven in its gladness, interpreting all intense passion through the soft spring nights, bursting into acclaim and rapture of choir at daybreak, or lisping and twittering among the boughs and hedges through heat of day, like little winds that only make the cowslip bells shake, and ruffle the petals of the wild rose.

Also, upon the plumes of the bird are put the colors of the air: on these the gold of the cloud, that cannot be gathered by any covetousness; the rubies of the clouds, the vermilion of the cloud-bar, and the flame of the cloud-crest, and the snow of the cloud, and its shadow, and the melted blue of the deep wells of the sky — all these, seized by the creating spirit, and woven into films and threads of plume; with wave on wave following and fading along breast, and throat, and opened wings, infinite as the dividing of the foam and the sifting of the sea-sand; — even the white down of the cloud seeming to flutter up between the stronger plumes, seen, but too soft for touch.

The experiment which we have just tried with this passage from Ruskin is the simplest test for unity. If a

paragraph does not stand this test, — if its contents cannot be summed up in a phrase or a sentence, — it is probably not a unit or organic whole.

A sentence which sums up the contents of a paragraph is often called a **topic sentence** (p. 168). Sometimes, as in the passage which we have been studying, the author himself uses such a sentence to begin a paragraph.

Macaulay's "Siege of Arcot" (pp. 395–399) is a series of admirably constructed paragraphs, each of which might easily be summed up in a **topic sentence.**

The first paragraph describes the events leading up to Clive's seizure of Arcot; the second recounts the swift preparations for the siege; the third enumerates the forces of the besiegers; the fourth tells of the weakness of the place besieged; the fifth, of the hardships of the garrison and their faithfulness, — and so on to the end.

It is obvious that the explanation could not have been so clear, and the natural progress of the story so distinct, if **unity** had not been carefully observed in the construction of every paragraph.

The following paragraphs illustrate the **principle of unity** in different kinds of writing: —

1. Whatever your amusements, or pleasures, may be at Hamburg, I dare say you taste them more sensibly than ever you did in your life, now that you have business enough to whet your appetite to them. Business, one half of the day, is the best preparation for the pleasures of the other half. I hope and believe that it will be with you as it was with an apothecary whom I knew at Twickenham. A comfortable estate fell to him by an unexpected accident; upon which he thought it decent to leave off his business. Accordingly, he generously gave up his shop and his stock to his head man, set up his coach, and resolved to live like a gentleman. But in less than a month the man, used to business, found that living like a gentleman was dying of *ennui;* upon which he bought his shop and stock, resumed his trade, and lived very happily after he had something to do. — CHESTERFIELD.

2. Shenstone, my dearest cousin, in his commentary on the vulgar adage which says, "Second thoughts are best," observes that the *third* thought generally resolves itself into the *first*. Thus it has happened to me. My first thought was to effect a transposition of the old glasses into the new frame; my second, that perhaps both the old glasses and the new frame might be broken in the experiment; and my third, nevertheless to make the trial. Accordingly I walked down to Olney this day, referred the matter to the watchmaker's consideration, and he has succeeded in the attempt to a wonder. I am at this moment peering through the same medium as usual, but with the advantage of a more ornamental mounting. — COWPER.

3. There are a thousand familiar disputes which reason can never decide; questions that elude investigation and make logic ridiculous; cases where something must be done and little can be said. Consider the state of mankind, and inquire how few can be supposed to act upon any occasion, either small or great, with all the reasons of action present to their minds. Wretched would be the pair, above all names of wretchedness, who should be doomed to adjust by reason every morning all the minute detail of a domestic day. — JOHNSON.

4. Pope, though a genius of a less masculine order than Dryden, and not possessed of his numbers or his impulsiveness, had more delicacy and fancy, has left more passages that have become proverbial, and was less confined to the region of matter of fact. Dryden never soared above earth, however nobly he walked it. The little fragile creature had wings; and he could expand them at will, and ascend, if to no great imaginative height, yet to charming fairy circles just above those of the world about him, disclosing enchanting visions at the top of drawing-rooms, and enabling us to see the spirits that wait on coffee-cups and hoop-petticoats. — LEIGH HUNT.

Each of these four examples might be summed up in a **topic sentence** as follows: —

1. You cannot be happy unless you have something to do.
2. Third thoughts are often the same as first thoughts.
3. The details of life cannot always be settled by reason.
4. Pope was less vigorous than Dryden but more imaginative.

USE OF THE TOPIC SENTENCE

The best way to ensure unity in paragraphs is to decide beforehand what shall be put into each. If the subject with which you are dealing is simple and the paragraph is to be pretty short, jot down on paper a word or a phrase to fix the point in mind. Such a word or phrase makes a natural title for the paragraph.

When, however, your paragraphs become longer, — either because the subject is more complicated, or because you are writing on a larger scale, — it is not so easy to be sure of their unity. In an exposition of baseball, for example, if you brought together into one paragraph the various topics which concern the pitcher, you would have to include some which concern the batter quite as much, — such as fair ball, base on balls, drop curve, and the like. How can you decide in which paragraph these topics belong? The simplest way is to sum up the substance of what you have to say about the pitcher in such a sentence as, "The pitcher should throw the ball over the home plate at the proper height and so as to elude the batter." If you keep such a **topic sentence** before you as you construct the paragraph, you can readily decide whether a given topic should be included or omitted.

That this is a practical device may easily be proved by applying it to any good piece of exposition. In Grey's "Kangaroo Hunt" (pp. 147–148), for example, the successive paragraphs may be summed up in the following sentences: — (1) "In the search for kangaroo the native keeps every nerve on the alert." (2) "The kangaroo is easily alarmed." (3) "The native shows great skill in stalking the kangaroo." In every well-planned exposition, and in many narratives and descriptions, we can readily make

a summary of each paragraph in a single topic sentence. Moreover, if we put these sentences together, we shall generally find that we have a pretty good summary of the whole composition. Thus a skilful author illustrates the old fable of "breaking the bundle of sticks": by taking up each part of his subject separately, he makes the whole easy to comprehend.

Your topic sentences will also serve as a test of unity after you have written your paragraphs. If you find anything in any paragraph which cannot fairly be regarded as covered by the topic sentence, it should either be cut out, or transferred to some other paragraph.

NOTE. — It would be pedantic to insist that every paragraph should be summarized in a sentence; in many cases a single word will show the unity better. In general, the paragraphs of an exposition admit more readily of being summarized in a sentence than the paragraphs of narration or pure (literary) description. Thus in an exposition the topic sentences will often correspond exactly to the divisions of the plan or outline (see pp. 167–168).

BEGINNING OF THE PARAGRAPH

In practice the unity of the paragraph must somehow be brought home to the reader. A simple and effectual way to accomplish this is to **make the first sentence indicate the subject of the paragraph.** This method is especially useful in expositions, and in narratives which have an explanatory purpose.

In the "Siege of Arcot," the sentences at the beginning of the first five paragraphs are as follows: —

1. Clive was now twenty-five years old.
2. But Clive well knew that he should not be suffered to retain undisturbed possession of his conquest.
3. The intelligence of these events was soon carried to Chunda Sahib, who, with his French allies, was besieging Trichinopoly.

4. Rajah Sahib proceeded to invest the fort of Arcot, which seemed quite incapable of sustaining a siege.
5. During fifty days the siege went on.

These five sentences give us a tolerable idea of what Macaulay was writing about, as may be seen by comparing them with the statement of the substance of the paragraphs (p. 280). He has carefully set up signposts to announce the subject of each paragraph as he came to it.

CLOSE OF THE PARAGRAPH

We have seen that a paragraph may begin with a sentence which states, in compact form, the subject of which the paragraph is to treat. For the same reason, it is often wise to **sum up** the point or essence of a paragraph in the **closing sentence.** In "The Siege of Arcot" (pp. 395–399), the last sentence of the first paragraph states the first result of Clive's swift action; the last sentence of the second sums up his defensive sortie; the last sentence of the third gives the numbers and the commander of the besieging force. In each case, the substance of the paragraph is left in the reader's mind by virtue of the clear and compact statement in the closing sentence. Such a sentence is particularly effective if it is brief, vigorous, and strikingly expressed, so as to rouse the attention and dwell in the memory. Burke, in his "Speech on Fox's East India Bill," has such a close in the following paragraph, in which he argues that Parliament should control the administration of India, in spite of the charter of the East India Company: —

That the power notoriously, grossly abused has been bought from us is very certain. But this circumstance, which is urged against the bill, becomes an additional motive for our interference,

lest we should be thought to have sold the blood of millions of men for the base consideration of money. We sold, I admit, all that we had to sell, — that is, our authority, not our control. *We had not a right to make a market of our duties.*

A few additional examples of this method of closing a paragraph will now be given for reference.

Macaulay, in his argument to justify Milton's political actions, ends a paragraph with this sentence: — "If these things do not justify resistance, the Revolution was treason; if they do, the Great Rebellion was laudable."

Chatham, in his "Speech on Removing the Troops from Boston," closes a paragraph in which he has insisted on the folly of the ministers who wish to use force against the Americans, as follows: — "They have not a move left; they are checkmated."

Burke, in his "Speech on Opening the Impeachment of Warren Hastings," closes a paragraph describing Hastings as "the head of the whole body of Eastern offenders" with the short and pointed sentence, "You strike at the whole corps, if you strike at the head."

Compare the passages from Byron and Thackeray (pp. 299, 318).

If you follow the suggestion on page 282, and write a sentence to test the unity of each of your own paragraphs, such a sentence will often serve either to open or to close the paragraph in a manner that will emphasize this unity.

TRANSITION AND COHERENCE

Though regard for unity will do much to make a composition easy and pleasant to read, yet unity alone will not suffice. The different portions of an essay — the several paragraphs and sentences — may observe this principle, and still be so distinct from each other that the whole will seem choppy and disjointed. To avoid this fault and to make the paragraph and the whole composition **coherent**,[1]

[1] See also pp. 177–180.

it is necessary to be careful about the **transition** [1] from sentence to sentence and from paragraph to paragraph.

The **transition from paragraph to paragraph** should be so smooth that the reader will feel no break in the thought, but merely a natural and easy step forward. This result may be accomplished in various ways.

A simple and useful device is to **begin a paragraph with a word or group of words referring to something mentioned in the paragraph that precedes.** Pronouns and demonstrative words are often employed for this purpose. If the reference is to the *very end* of the preceding paragraph, the transition becomes particularly easy.

In the following examples, the close of one paragraph and the opening of the next are given, and the transitional word, phrase, or sentence is italicized: —

1. The neighbors looked upon him with a mixture of awe, admiration, and good will; and when any madcap prank or rustic brawl occurred in the vicinity, always shook their heads, and warranted Brom Bones was at the bottom of it.

This rantipole hero had for some time singled out the blooming Katrina for the object of his uncouth gallantries. — IRVING.

2. At any rate, he was as tenderly grateful for kindness as he was susceptible of slight and wrong; and, lonely as he was generally, yet had one or two very warm friendships for his companions of those days.

One of these was a queer gentleman that resided in the university, though he was no member of it, and was the professor of a science scarce recognized in the common course of college education. — THACKERAY.

3. We gained the ridge of the hill, and for the first time came in sight of the buffalo on the plain beyond.

They were a band of cows, four or five hundred in number, who were crowded together near the bank of a wide stream that was soaking across the sand-beds of the valley. — PARKMAN.

[1] *Transition* (from the Latin *trans*, "across," and *ire*, "to go") means simply "the act or process of passing over."

4. Shaking us warmly by the hand, he led the way into the area. *Here* we saw his large Santa Fé wagons standing together. — PARKMAN.

5. I then took off my spectacles, and, waiting about an hour, till the tide was a little fallen, I waded through the middle with my cargo, and arrived safe in the royal port of Lilliput.

The emperor and his whole court stood on the shore, expecting the issue of this great adventure. When they saw, etc. — SWIFT.

6. Wafer bread-and-butter and sponge biscuits were all that the Honorable Mrs. Jamieson gave ; and she was sister-in-law to the late Earl of Glenmire, although she did practice such " elegant economy."

" *Elegant economy !* " How naturally one falls back into the phraseology of Cranford ! — MRS. GASKELL.

7. He ran swiftly, till want of breath compelled him to slacken his pace as he was entering the village at the turning close to the Rainbow.

The Rainbow, in Marner's view, was a place of luxurious resort for rich and stout husbands, whose wives had superfluous stores of linen. — GEORGE ELIOT.

8. It was early in the year ; but as soon as the weather was auspicious and the spring began to melt into the verge of summer, we took rod in hand and sallied into the country, as stark mad as was ever Don Quixote from reading books of chivalry.

One of our party had equalled the Don in the fulness of his equipments, being attired cap-a-pie for the enterprise. — IRVING.

9. The stranger's conversation, which was at once pleasing and instructive, induced me to wish for a continuance of it ; but it was now high time to retire and take refreshment against the fatigues of the following day.

The next morning, we all set forward together. — GOLDSMITH.

10. At the approach of evening he took leave ; but not till he had requested permission to renew his visit, which, as he was our landlord, we most readily agreed to.

As soon as he was gone, my wife called a council on the conduct of the day. —GOLDSMITH.

Similarly, in Hawthorne's " Tanglewood Porch " (pp. 391–393), the last sentence of the first paragraph mentions " the morning mist," and the second paragraph begins, " *This* body of white

vapor"; the fourth closes with "earthly children," and the fifth begins, "It is not to be supposed that *these* little folks"; the fifth ends with the name "Eustace Bright," and the sixth begins, "*This* learned student."

In Mrs. Carlyle's "Housekeeping" (pp. 393–395), the transitions are similarly managed. "Shall I tell you how *it* came into my head?" refers back to "when I found *it* out for myself"; "It behooved me in *these* astonishing circumstances," to the state of things just described; "*So* I . . . fell to work at a loaf of bread," to "it was plainly my duty . . . to bake at home"; "One o'clock struck," to "I remained the only person not asleep"; "It was *then*," to "I laid down my head on the table and sobbed aloud"; "*This* germ of an idea," to the idea expressed in what immediately precedes.

The method of transition just illustrated is not a mere trick of style. To employ it successfully, we must so arrange our sentences that the last thing mentioned in one paragraph shall naturally come first in the next. And this is impossible without an orderly and logical succession in the ideas which the sentences express.

Sometimes the last sentence of a paragraph refers forward in plain terms to the next paragraph, announcing what its topic is to be. This device is common in introductions, or in passing from one division of a subject to another. Thus, —

1. I have thus far, to the best of my knowledge, been an upright judge betwixt the parties in competition, [Ovid and Chaucer,] not meddling with the design nor[1] the disposition of it; because the design was not their own, and in the disposing of it they were equal. *It remains that I say somewhat of Chaucer in particular.*

In the first place, as he is the father of English poetry, so I hold him in the same degree of veneration as the Grecians held Homer, or the Romans Virgil. — Dryden.

2. The grounds of so singular and wide a popularity [as that of Burns], which extends, in a literal sense, from the palace to the

[1] See p. 12, note 2.

hut, and over all regions where the English tongue is spoken, are well worth inquiring into. After every just deduction, it seems to imply some rare excellence. *What is that excellence?*

To answer this question will not lead us far. The excellence of Burns is, etc. — CARLYLE.

3. We come now to a humor that flows from quite a different heart and spirit, — a wit that makes us laugh and leaves us good and happy; and one of the kindest benefactors that society has ever had; and *I believe you have divined already that I am about to mention Addison's honored name.*

From reading over his writings, and the biographies we have of him, etc. — THACKERAY.

4. There is nothing which I dread so much as the being left alone for a quarter of an hour with a sensible, well-informed man that does not know me. *I lately got into a dilemma of this sort.*

In one of my daily jaunts between Bishopsgate and Shacklewell, the coach stopped to take up a staid-looking gentleman, etc. — LAMB.

Transition is often accomplished by means of a word like *moreover, notwithstanding, however,* or *nevertheless;* or a phrase like *in addition to, on the other hand, in spite of,* or the like. Such words or phrases give notice, as it were, how the new paragraph bears on the preceding one; that it carries on the thought in the same direction, and adds to its force; or that it modifies it, or perhaps counteracts its effect or refutes it. The variety of such words and phrases is very great; but they all serve the same purpose, — to conduct the reader smoothly and easily from one paragraph to another. For example: —

1. A sentiment may be changed by being put into a pointed and oratorical form, yet may still be very effective in that form; but a description, the moment it takes its eyes off that which it is to describe, and begins to think of ornamenting itself, is worthless.

Therefore, I say, the translator of Homer should penetrate himself with a sense of the plainness and directness of Homer's style. — MATTHEW ARNOLD.

2. My heart melted within me to see my fellow-creatures groaning under their respective burdens, and to consider that prodigious bulk of human calamities which lay before me.

There were, *however*, several persons who gave me great diversion upon this occasion. — Addison.

3. And you know that a little thought and a little kindness are often worth more than a great deal of money.

Now this charity of thought is not merely to be exercised towards the poor; it is to be exercised towards all men. — Ruskin.

4. Had our young stranger got nothing by his voyage but the sight of the breathing and moving Plato, had he entered no lecture room to hear, no gymnasium to converse, he had got some measure of education, and something to tell of to his grandchildren.

But Plato is not the only sage, nor the sight of him the only lesson to be learned in this wonderful suburb. — Newman.

5. My Lord Mayor had a low gallery built on purpose in his hall, where he stood a little removed from the crowd when any complaint came to be heard, that he might appear with as much safety as possible.

Likewise the proper officers, called my Lord Mayor's officers, constantly attended in turns. — De Foe.

6. Nor does the process of induction and deduction by which a lady, finding a stain of a peculiar kind upon her dress, concludes that somebody has upset the inkstand thereon, differ in any way, in kind, from that by which Adams and Leverrier discovered a new planet.

The man of science, *in fact*, simply uses, with scrupulous exactness, the methods which we all, habitually and at every moment, use carelessly. — Huxley.

Note. — Common words and phrases of transition are: — therefore, hence, thus, accordingly, in this way, it follows that, nevertheless, yet, and yet, still, however, on the contrary, on the other hand, moreover, further, furthermore, again, also, likewise, in addition, next, similarly, in like manner, in the same way, notwithstanding, to be sure, true, it is true, I admit, we may grant, in spite of, to begin with, finally, to sum up, in short, on the whole, after all.

Transition is necessary in every kind of writing. In **stories** and **descriptions** the transition from paragraph to

paragraph almost takes care of itself, for we naturally indicate simple relations of time, place, or cause and effect, as we pass from one step to another. In **exposition** and **argument,** however, we begin by arranging the material in such a way that like topics fall together in groups, without regard to their original time or place (pp. 163–170). If now, we leave these groups without unmistakable signs of the logical relations between them, the reader will have to puzzle out the connection for himself. Since the purpose of an exposition or an argument is to make these relations evident, care for transition becomes of very great importance.

We have seen, for example, how distinctly and scrupulously Burke marks the transition from point to point of his argument on "Conciliation with America" (p. 177). Compare, in the same speech, the following sentences, which open seven successive paragraphs: —

I found four capital examples in a similar case before me, — those of Ireland, Wales, Chester, and Durham.

Ireland before the English conquest, though never governed by a despotic power, had no parliament.

My next example is Wales.

The very same year the County Palatine of Chester received the same relief from its oppressions and the same remedy to its disorders.

Here is my third example. It was attended with the success of the two former. Chester, civilized as well as Wales, has demonstrated that freedom, and not servitude, is the cure for anarchy; as religion, and not atheism, is the true remedy for superstition.

Sir, this pattern of Chester was followed in the reign of Charles the Second with regard to the County Palatine of Durham, which is my fourth example.

Now if the doctrines of policy contained in these preambles and the force of these examples avail anything, what can be said against applying them with regard to America?

Similarly, Carlyle in his "Essay on Burns" opens different paragraphs,[1] which mark the progress of his discussion, as follows: —

But we return to his poetry.

But to leave the mere literary character of Burns, which has already detained us too long.

But we must stop short in these considerations, which would lead us to boundless lengths.

It seems to us another circumstance of fatal import in Burns's history, that, etc.

We are here arrived at the crisis of Burns's life.

Still less, therefore, are we disposed to join with another class of Burns's admirers.

In long expositions or arguments, a whole paragraph is sometimes needed to introduce or sum up a division of the subject, or to mark the passage from one division to another. Such **transitional paragraphs** should be brief and business-like; they may even consist of but a single sentence. Several examples occur in Lubbock's "Fertilization of Plants" (p. 151); compare also the following: —

1. This, then, being the state of things respecting art in general, let us next trace the career of landscape through these centuries. — Ruskin.

2. Adhering, Sir, as I do, to this policy, as well as for the reasons I have just given, I think this new project of hedging-in population to be neither prudent nor practicable. — Burke.

3. If, then, the removal of the causes of this spirit of American liberty be for the greater part, or rather entirely, impracticable; if the ideas of criminal process be inapplicable, or if applicable, are in the highest degree inexpedient; what way yet remains? No way is open but the third and last, — to comply with the American spirit as necessary; or, if you please, to submit to it as a necessary evil. — Burke.

[1] The paragraphs are not continuous, but are taken, for illustration, from different parts of the essay.

4. Having in the foregoing chapters confined myself to the proceedings of the commons only, by the method of impeachments against particular persons, with the fatal effects they had upon the state of Athens, I shall now treat of the dissensions at Rome between the people and the collective body of the patricians or nobles. It is a large subject, but I shall draw it into as narrow a compass as I can. — SWIFT.

NOTE. — Transition cannot be taught by precept. It is a difficult point of literary technique, and, like all matters of technique, must be learned by observation of good models, by imitation, and by unremitting practice under expert guidance. The student will do well to examine several essays of some length, with special reference to the beginning and the end of each paragraph. He should notice when the closing sentence of a paragraph leads up to the opening words of the next, and when the beginning of a paragraph refers back to what has gone before. He will find it useful to draw up a list of transitional words, phrases, and sentences which seem likely to be of service to him, and to make a definite effort to work some of them into his own compositions. Such study and practice will soon have an influence on his thought and his style. Good material may be found in Carlyle's "Burns," Ruskin's "Sesame and Lilies," and Burke's "Conciliation with America." Of course, there is a little danger in this process. But the student's good sense should prevent him from slavishly copying mere tricks of expression and catch-phrases without regard to their appropriateness. He should remember, too, that sometimes the connection of thought is so obvious that transitional phrases are unnecessary.

TRANSITION WITHIN THE PARAGRAPH

The **transition from sentence to sentence** within the paragraph should be as smooth as that from paragraph to paragraph. In general, it is accomplished in much the same way.

Observe how easily one follows the narrative in "The Siege of Arcot" (pp. 395–399). The reason is that Macaulay takes pains to carry his reader along from sentence to sentence by always making clear how the successive facts are related to each other.

In the first place, he makes free use of **conjunctions** and **connective phrases.**

The fifth paragraph contains three examples, — *however*, *under such circumstances*, and *but*. The conjunction *however* in the third sentence shows that the facts which follow are opposed in thought to what has preceded. The phrase *under such circumstances* shows, on the contrary, that the facts in this sentence must be understood in the light of what comes before. The *but*, a little below, gives notice that the thought is changing again.

If we read the paragraph aloud, leaving out these five words only, we shall see how much they assist the reader. By their use Macaulay made it possible to pass swiftly, and without effort, from one fact to another in the successive sentences.

Another way to smooth the reader's passage from sentence to sentence is to use **pronouns** and **demonstratives** frequently. Thus, in the third paragraph of "The Siege of Arcot," every sentence after the first has a pronoun or a demonstrative either at or near the beginning. In order to appreciate the effect of these pronouns, let us read the passage in the following form: —

The intelligence of these events was soon carried to Chunda Sahib, who, with his French allies, was besieging Trichinopoly. Four thousand men, detached from his camp, immediately started for Arcot. The remains of the force lately scattered by Clive joined these four thousand. The force was strengthened by two thousand men from Vellore, and Dupleix despatched a still more important reinforcement of a hundred and fifty French soldiers from Pondicherry. Rajah Sahib, son of Chunda Sahib, commanded the whole army, amounting to about ten thousand men.

In this form the passage is much harder to read and the sense is not so readily grasped. We miss the constant succession of *he* and *they* and *this*, which show us, as we come to each fresh sentence, that the new thought concerns the person or persons or things mentioned in the sentence preceding. Such words, then, are like the transitional

conjunctions which we have just studied; for they also serve as guideposts to direct our thought as it tries to follow the author's meaning.

In the following paragraph from Hawthorne's "Golden Touch," each sentence is connected with what has gone before in one or another of the ways which we have been studying: —

> Whether Midas slept as usual *that night*, the story does not say. Asleep or awake, *however*, *his* mind was probably in the state of a child's, to whom a beautiful new plaything has been promised in the morning. *At any rate*, day had hardly peeped over the hills, when King Midas was broad awake, and, stretching his arms out of bed, began to touch the objects that were within reach. *He* was anxious to prove whether the Golden Touch had really come, according to the stranger's promise. *So he* laid his finger on a chair by the bedside, and on various other things, but was grievously disappointed to perceive that they remained of exactly the same substance as before. *Indeed*, he felt very much afraid that he had only dreamed about the lustrous *stranger*, or else that the latter had been making game of him. *And* what a miserable affair would it be, if, after all his hopes, Midas must content himself with what little gold he could scrape together by ordinary means, instead of creating it by a touch!

The words in italics bind the sentences together so closely that we feel no sudden breaks as we read, and so grasp the relations between the successive facts without conscious effort.

Care for easy transition from sentence to sentence is especially important in expositions and arguments: it welds the substance of each paragraph together so closely that the reader can grasp it all as a single thought. If our paragraphs are thus firmly **coherent**, they enable us to handle large and comprehensive ideas without making undue demands on the reader's attention, and therefore to deal with complicated subjects in a satisfactory way. If

on the other hand, we jerk the reader's mind from one sentence to another, without indicating the connection, the essay will leave the impression of a crude mass of unrelated details. Even if each paragraph has unity, the reader will hardly realize the fact unless there are easy transitions as well. Moreover, though a style marked by short, jerky, and disconnected sentences may for a time seem brisk and clever, it soon palls and in the long run gives an effect of **incoherence of thought** and a rather cheap smartness.

EMPHASIS IN THE PARAGRAPH

In studying narration we have found that a story is often constructed on the principle of the **climax** (p. 37). This same principle is often followed in constructing a **paragraph**: for example, —

> The mind is ever ingenious in making its own distress. The wandering beggar, who has none to protect, or feed, or shelter him, fancies complete happiness in labor and a full meal. Take him from rags and want; feed, clothe, and employ him: his wishes now rise one step above his station; he could be happy were he possessed of raiment, food, and ease. Suppose his wishes gratified even in these; his prospects widen as he ascends. He finds himself in affluence and tranquillity, indeed, but indolence soon breeds anxiety, and he desires not only to be freed from pain, but to be possessed of pleasure. Pleasure is granted him, but this opens his soul to ambition; and ambition will be sure to taint his future happiness, either with jealousy, disappointment, or fatigue. — GOLDSMITH.

For other examples of paragraphs which observe the principle of the **climax,** see the extracts from Irving (p. 109), Macaulay (pp. 117, 305), Huxley (p. 173), Goldsmith (p. 298), Burke (pp. 300, 337), Lubbock (p. 305), and Thackeray (p. 307).

When it is impossible or inadvisable to construct the whole paragraph on the principle of the climax, one may often produce a similar effect by **closing with an emphatic sentence** (see pp. 284–285). At all events, since the end of a paragraph is a natural place for emphasis, we should take care not to conclude with a feeble or colorless sentence.

In general, if a paragraph is clear and coherent and sets forth the thought in a reasonable and logical order, emphasis will almost take care of itself. It is a good practice, however, to read one's compositions aloud with special attention to the natural stress of the voice. This test will often enable a writer to detect errors in arrangement that have escaped his eye.

FORMS OF THE PARAGRAPH

Paragraphs are developed in many ways, since they follow in their structure the infinite varieties of thought. An exhaustive classification, therefore, is impossible, even if it were desirable. Still, there are certain methods which are so often observed in constructing paragraphs that they are worth specifying and illustrating.

The examples which follow are intended for study and reference. The student should guard against the error of supposing that paragraphs are divisible into fixed types to which it is his duty to conform. **Clearness, unity, coherence,** and **emphasis** are the only valid principles in the structure of paragraphs. Their precise form will depend, in each case, on the nature of the subject and the order of thought.

In narration, a paragraph is often constructed by **adding one incident to another** in order of time. Thus: —

About four hours after we began our journey, I was awaked by a very singular accident; for, the carriage being stopped awhile,

to adjust something that was out of order, two or three of the young natives had the curiosity to see how I looked when I was asleep. They climbed up into the engine, and, advancing very softly to my face, one of them, an officer in the guards, put the sharp end of his half-pike a good way up into my left nostril, which tickled my nose like a straw, and made me sneeze violently; whereupon they stole off unperceived, and it was three weeks before I knew the cause of my wakening so suddenly. We made a long march the remaining part of the day, and rested at night with five hundred guards on each side of me, half with torches, and half with bows and arrows, ready to shoot me if I should offer to stir. The next morning at sunrise we continued our march, and arrived within two hundred yards of the city gates about noon. — SWIFT.

Attracted by the serenity of the evening, my friend and I lately went to gaze upon the company in one of the public walks near the city. Here we sauntered together for some time, either praising the beauty of such as were handsome, or the dresses of such as had nothing else to recommend them. We had gone thus deliberately forward for some time, when, stopping on a sudden, my friend caught me by the elbow and led me out of the public walk. I could perceive by the quickness of his pace, and by his frequently looking behind, that he was attempting to avoid somebody who followed. We now turned to the right, then to the left; as we went forward he still went faster, but in vain; the person whom he attempted to escape, hunted us through every doubling, and gained upon us each moment; so that at last we fairly stood still, resolving to face what we could not avoid. — GOLDSMITH.

Other examples may be found on pages 12–18, 22–28, 33, 38, 174.

In description, a paragraph is often formed by **accumulating the specific details** by means of which the whole impression is to be produced.

Thus the second paragraph of Hawthorne's description of Tanglewood Porch (p. 393) gives the details of the view; the fourth and fifth give many details about Eustace Bright. The last paragraph of Dickens's description of "The Old Boat" (p. 93) names a number of the things to be seen in the interior.

For other examples, see pages 45, 54, 89–95, 96, 99–101, 106, 110, 112–114, 117–119, 123, 125; 127, 130, 131.

In such paragraphs the arrangement is often rather haphazard, in unconscious imitation of the accidental order in which the objects happen to catch the eye. Nevertheless, the paragraph must have unity (p. 278), and the description must be "composed" (p. 126). Sometimes, indeed, when the central idea of a description is *disorder*, the paragraph throws the details together "anyhow." So in the following passage from one of Byron's letters, which gives, by means of one long, rambling sentence, crowded with heterogeneous details,[1] a first-rate impression of the hurry and hubbub of the scene he wishes to describe: —

We have had a deluge here, which has carried away half the country between this and Genoa (about two miles or less distant), but, being on a hill, we were only nearly knocked down by the lightning and battered by columns of rain, and our lower floor afloat, with the comfortable view of the whole landscape under water, and people screaming out of their garret windows; two bridges swept down, and our next-door neighbors — a cobbler, a wigmaker, and a gingerbread baker — delivering up their whole stock to the elements, which marched away with a quantity of shoes, several perukes, and gingerbread in all branches. The whole came on so suddenly that there was no time to prepare.

In most descriptions, however, there is, as we have seen, some order in the details.

Thus, both paragraphs of George Eliot's description of the Valley of the Floss (p. 99) consist of details; but in both there is a definite principle of arrangement in accordance with the "moving point of view" (see p. 109). So also in Stevenson's description of the coral island (p. 130). In Hawthorne's description of the pigs (p. 131), the details follow the natural order of observation.

[1] Note that the paragraph is knit up at the end by means of a short and compact sentence (cf. p. 284).

In **exposition** and **argument,** the paragraphs are, for obvious reasons, more formal and systematic than in narration or description. Several of the commoner types will now be indicated.

A common use of a paragraph in exposition and argument is for the **definition of some term or terms** which need to be precisely understood in the discussion that is to follow. Thus, —

Justice may be defined to be that virtue which impels us to give to every person what is his due. In this extended sense of the word, it comprehends the practice of every virtue which reason prescribes or society should expect. Our duty to our Maker, to each other, and to ourselves, is fully answered, if we give them what we owe them. Thus justice, properly speaking, is the only virtue, and all the rest have their origin in it. — GOLDSMITH.

In the following paragraph Burke defines his project for "Conciliation with America." The paragraph might be summed up in a sentence: "My plan is to pacify the Americans by yielding the point in dispute": —

The proposition is peace. Not peace through the medium of war; not peace to be hunted through the labyrinth of intricate and endless negotiations; not peace to arise out of universal discord fomented from principle in all parts of the empire; not peace to depend on the juridical determination of perplexing questions, or the precise marking the shadowy boundaries of a complex government. It is simple peace, sought in its natural course and in its ordinary haunts. It is peace sought in the spirit of peace, and laid in principles purely pacific. I propose, by removing the ground of the difference, and by restoring the *former unsuspecting confidence of the colonies in the mother country*, to give permanent satisfaction to your people; and (far from a scheme of ruling by discord) to reconcile them to each other in the same act and by the bond of the very same interest which reconciles them to British government. — BURKE.

For other examples of paragraphs containing definitions, see pages 161, 173.

A paragraph may begin with a statement, or **proposition,** and then go on to give one or more **examples** which illustrate and enforce it. Thus, —

Money is so hardly earned by the Parisian workman and workwoman, and existence is such a struggle, that we need not wonder at the deadly tenacity with which earnings are clutched at. When, some years ago, the Opéra Comique blazed, amid a scene awful as that of a battlefield, the women attendants thought of their tips, the half franc due here and there for a footstool. Unmindful of their own peril and that of others, they rushed to and fro, besieging half-suffocated, half-demented creatures for their money! A similar scene happened during the terrible catastrophe on the Paris underground railway last year. Although the delay of a few seconds might mean life or death, many workmen refused to move from the crowded station, clamoring for the return of the forfeited twopenny ticket. — Miss Betham-Edwards.[1]

For other paragraphs containing examples, see pages 149–150, 180, 181, 239, 280, 281.

A paragraph may **begin** with an apt **illustration** and then proceed to apply it to the case in hand. Thus, —

It is said that the hasty and rapacious Kneller used to send away the ladies who sat to him [for their portraits] after sketching their faces, and to paint the figure and hands from his housemaid. It was much in the same way that Walpole portrayed the minds of others. He copied from the life only those glaring and obvious peculiarities which could not escape the most superficial observation. The rest of the canvas he filled up in a careless, dashing way, with knave and fool, mixed in such proportions as pleased heaven. What a difference between these daubs and the masterly portraits of Clarendon! — Macaulay.

[1] From "Home Life in France."

A paragraph may consist of a **proposition** followed by a brief **proof.** Thus, —

1. Our sight is the most perfect and most delightful of all our senses. It fills the mind with the largest ideas, converses with its objects at the greatest distance, and continues the longest in action without being tired or satiated with its proper enjoyments. The sense of feeling can indeed give us a notion of extension, shape, and all other ideas that enter at the eye, except colors ; but at the same time it is very much straitened and confined in its operations, to the number, bulk, and distance of its particular objects. Our sight seems designed to supply all these defects, and may be considered as a more delicate and diffusive kind of touch, that spreads itself over an infinite multitude of bodies, comprehends the largest figures, and brings into our reach some of the most remote parts of the universe. — Addison.

2. Most men have, and almost every man should have, a hobby. It is exercise in a mild way, and does not take him away from home. It diverts him, and, by having a double line of rails, he can manage to keep the permanent way in good condition. A man who has only one object in life, only one line of rails, — who exercises only one set of faculties, and these only in one way, — will wear himself out much sooner than a man who shunts himself every now and then, and who has trains coming as well as going, — who takes in as well as gives out. — Dr. John Brown.

3. I have often told you that I do not think there is any jealousy, properly so called, in the character of Othello. There is no predisposition to suspicion, which I take to be an essential term in the definition of the word. Desdemona very truly told Emilia that he was not jealous, that is, of a jealous habit, and he says so as truly of himself. Iago's suggestions, you see, are quite new to him ; they do not correspond with anything of a like nature previously in his mind. If Desdemona had, in fact, been guilty, no one would have thought of calling Othello's conduct that of a jealous man. He could not act otherwise than he did with the lights he had ; whereas jealousy can never be strictly right. See how utterly unlike Othello is to Leontes, in "The Winter's Tale," or even to Leonatus, in "Cymbeline"! The jealousy of the first proceeds from an evident trifle, and something like hatred is mingled

with it; and the conduct of Leonatus in accepting the wager, and exposing his wife to the trial, denotes a jealous temper already formed.— COLERIDGE.

For a paragraph of **proof** and **refutation,** see page 215; for one of pure **refutation,** see page 239.

A paragraph may begin by stating the **cause** of something and then proceed to give the **effect.** For an example see the extract from Mr. John Burroughs on page 162.

A paragraph sometimes begins with the statement of a fact and then gives the **causes** or **reasons** which account for it. Thus Fuller, speaking of English schoolmasters in the seventeenth century, says: —

There is scarce any profession in the commonwealth more necessary, which is so slightly performed. The reasons whereof I conceive to be these: — First, young scholars make this calling their refuge, yea, perchance, before they have taken any degree in the university, commence schoolmasters in the country, as if nothing else were required to set up this profession but only a rod and a ferula. Secondly, others, who are able, use it only as a passage to better preferment, to patch the rents in their present fortune till they can provide a new one and betake themselves to some more gainful calling. Thirdly, they are disheartened from doing their best with the miserable reward which in some places they receive, being masters to the children and slaves to their parents. Fourthly, being grown rich, they grow negligent, and scorn to touch the school but by the proxy of an usher.[1]

A paragraph may consist of a **comparison** between things that are similar or a **contrast** between things that are unlike. Thus, —

1. The external form of the foot differs widely from that of the hand; and yet, when closely compared, the two present some singular resemblances. Thus, the ankle corresponds in a manner with the wrist; the sole with the palm; the toes with the fingers; the great toe with the thumb. But the toes, or digits of the foot,

[1] From "The Holy State."

are far shorter in proportion than the digits of the hand, and are less movable, the want of mobility being most striking in the great toe — which, again, is very much larger in proportion to the other toes than the thumb to the fingers. In considering this point, however, it must not be forgotten that the civilized great toe, confined and cramped from childhood upwards, is seen to a great disadvantage, and that in uncivilized and barefooted people it retains a great amount of mobility, and even some sort of opposability. The Chinese boatmen are said to be able to pull an oar, the artisans of Bengal to weave, and the Carajas to steal fishhooks, by its help; though, after all, it must be recollected that the structure of its joints and the arrangement of its bones, necessarily render its prehensile action far less perfect than that of the thumb. — HUXLEY.

2. The coasting trade and the distant trade have each their advantages in training mariners. The former is more exposed to danger, requiring the most constant vigilance, which the neighborhood of a coast always calls for, and gives more skill in the management of anchors, than the more regular and less anxious navigation of the Atlantic or the Indian Ocean — more even than the shorter voyages of the Baltic and the North Sea. But the longer voyage has the advantage of keeping the seaman longer on board; the crew of a West Indiaman or an East Indiaman are more months in the year on shipboard than the crew of a Newcastle collier or even a Hamburg trader. There is also more regularity and discipline in a ship which has twenty or thirty men than in one manned by three or four. — BROUGHAM.

3. I have two French prints hanging in my study, both on Iliad subjects; and I have an English one in the parlor, on a subject from the same poem. In one of the former, Agamemnon addresses Achilles exactly in the attitude of a dancing master turning miss in a minuet: in the latter the figures are plain, and the attitudes plain also. This is, in some considerable measure I believe, the difference between my translation and Pope's; and will serve as an exemplification of what I am going to lay before you and the public. — COWPER.

4. I have so little to do that I am surprised how I can find time to write to you so often. Do not stare at the seeming paradox; for it is an undoubted truth that the less one has to do, the less

time one finds to do it in. One yawns, one procrastinates; one can do it when one will, and therefore one seldom does it at all: whereas those who have a great deal of business must (to use a vulgar expression) buckle to it; and then they always find time enough to do it in. — CHESTERFIELD.

For other examples of **comparison** or **contrast,** see pages 112, 121–123, 154–156, 175, 181, 183–185.

A paragraph may begin with a **negative statement** and pass over to affirmation. Thus, —

The spirits of Milton are unlike those of almost all other writers. His fiends, in particular, are wonderful creations. They are not metaphysical abstractions. They are not wicked men. They are not ugly beasts. They have no horns, no tails, none of the fee-faw-fum of Tasso and Klopstock. They have just enough in common with human nature to be intelligible to human beings. Their characters are, like their forms, marked by a certain dim resemblance to those of men, but exaggerated to gigantic dimensions, and veiled in mysterious gloom. — MACAULAY.

A paragraph may **divide the subject,** stating either the heads under which it is to be taken up or different aspects in which it is worthy of attention. Thus, —

1. In explaining to you the proceedings of Parliament which have been complained of, I will state to you, first, the thing that was done; next, the persons who did it; and lastly, the grounds and reasons upon which the legislature proceeded in this deliberate act of public justice and public prudence. — BURKE.[1]

2. The study of the lower races of men, apart from the direct importance which it possesses in an empire like ours, is of great interest from three points of view. In the first place, the condition and habits of existing savages resemble in many ways, though not in all, those of our own ancestors in a period now long gone by; in the second, they illustrate much of what is passing among ourselves — many customs which have evidently no relation to present circumstances, and some ideas which are rooted in our minds as

[1] From the "Speech at Bristol."

fossils are embedded in the soil; while, thirdly, we can even, by means of them, penetrate some of the mist which separates the present from the future. — LUBBOCK.[1]

3. Of modern Scottish poetry in its relation to the world of outward nature, there are two obvious features. First, there is love for free, wild nature, and the objects that fill up the landscape, — as flower and tree, stream, haugh, and glen, — and there is a tendency to indulge in full and minute description, more or less faithful. Burns, Leyden, Scott, and Hogg afford ample illustrations of this general characteristic. Secondly, there is an imaginative sympathy for the grand and powerful in nature, — as mountain height and cataract, the foaming flood, the force of ocean, and the dark wind-swept wood as it sways in the storm. Of the feeling for this aspect of nature we have notable examples in the delineations of Leyden, Scott, and John Wilson. — JOHN VEITCH.[2]

A concluding paragraph may **sum up** the contents or main points of a chapter or essay. For specimens, see pages 150, 156, 175, 176.

A paragraph, as we have seen, may consist in a kind of **development** or **expansion** of the thought contained in the **opening sentence,** — the topic sentence, as it is often called. Examples may be found on pages 161, 162, 163, 239, 296, 300. Compare also the following passage from Macaulay's "Essay on Milton": —

He who, in an enlightened and literary society, aspires to be a great poet, must first become a little child. He must take to pieces the whole web of his mind. He must unlearn much of that knowledge which has perhaps constituted hitherto his chief title to superiority. His very talents will be a hindrance to him. His difficulties will be proportioned to his proficiency in the pursuits which are fashionable among his contemporaries; and that proficiency will in general be proportioned to the vigor and activity of his mind. And it is well if, after all his sacrifices and exertions,

[1] From "The Origin of Civilization."
[2] From "The Feeling for Nature in Scottish Poetry."

his works do not resemble a lisping man, or a modern ruin. We have seen, in our own time, great talents, intense labor, and long meditation, employed in this struggle against the spirit of the age, and employed, we will not say, absolutely in vain, but with dubious success and feeble applause.

Sometimes a paragraph is made by **repeating,** with some modification, the thought expressed in the **topic sentence.** Thus, —

In these astonishing lines, [the conclusion of "The Dunciad,"] Pope reaches, I think, to the very greatest height which his sublime art has attained, and shows himself the equal of all poets of all times. It is the brightest ardor, the loftiest assertion of truth, the most generous wisdom, illustrated by the noblest poetic figure, and spoken in words the aptest, grandest, and most harmonious. It is heroic courage speaking; a splendid declaration of righteous wrath and war. It is the gage flung down, and the silver trumpet ringing defiance to falsehood and tyranny, deceit, dulness, superstition. It is Truth, the champion, shining and intrepid, and fronting the great world-tyrant with armies of slaves at his back. It is a wonderful and victorious single combat, in that great battle which has always been waging since society began. — THACKERAY.[1]

For repetition in general, with further examples, see pages 386–388.

In concluding our study of paragraphs, we must emphasize once more their **variety.** The choice among different forms and different lengths is a matter of expediency. Every writer, therefore, is obliged to rely upon his own judgment; he cannot depend upon rules and types. It is a common fault of unpractised writers to make their paragraphs too short. Sometimes, indeed, their error goes so far that each sentence stands in a paragraph by itself. On the other hand, very long paragraphs are equally questionable. The only safe guides are care and common sense.

[1] From "The English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century."

EXERCISES IN PARAGRAPHS[1]

1. Write a paragraph beginning with the topic sentence, "You cannot be happy unless you have something to do"; with the topic sentence, "Third thoughts are often the same as first thoughts." Compare your paragraphs with the first and second examples on pages 280–281. Be careful to observe unity.

2. Make topic sentences for the five extracts on pages 161–163. Compare your topic sentence with the opening sentence of the selection in each case.

3. Make a topic sentence for each paragraph of your latest composition, and use these sentences as a test of unity. If any paragraph violates the principle of unity, revise it.

4. Make a topic sentence for a paragraph on each of the following subjects: — a wigwam; a flint arrow-head; how to fish for brook trout; our last debate; a tennis court; Cedric the Saxon (in "Ivanhoe"); witchcraft; a sawmill.

5. Write a paragraph on each of the subjects mentioned in Exercise 4. Exchange paragraphs with a classmate and criticise his composition with respect to unity. Rewrite your own paragraph, if necessary, in the light of your classmate's criticism.

6. Turn back to the outlines which you prepared in studying the exercises on page 203. Use one of them as the basis of a composition, constructing your paragraphs in accordance with the outline. Prepare a topic sentence for each paragraph. Note that these sentences give you a summary of the composition (p. 168).

7. Write two paragraphs, the first asking a question, and the second replying to the question.

8. Write a paragraph in which the main thought is expressed in the first sentence, and explained by the sentences which follow.

9. Write a paragraph in which the topic sentence is used at the end of the paragraph (see page 285).

10. Study the examples on pages 286–287; then find examples of paragraphs beginning with a word or group of words referring to something that precedes. See if you have used this method of transition in your own compositions.

[1] For further practice, see pp. 431–432. Many of the exercises on pp. 78–88, 134–144, and 200–210, may also be utilized for practice in paragraphing.

11. Extend the study indicated in the preceding exercise to the method of transition described on page 288.

12. Prepare two paragraphs, contrasting the characters of two persons of whom you have read. To indicate the contrast use "on the contrary" in the first sentence of the second paragraph.

13. Study the transitions from paragraph to paragraph in Scott's "Battle of Bannockburn" (p. 22); in "Australian Superstition" (p. 27). Point out transitional words or phrases.

14. From books that you have read or studied within two days, make a list of words or phrases that assist in transition.

Write two paragraphs of your own, using one of these words or phrases to make a transition from the first to the second.

15. Make a list of conjunctions, conjunctive adverbs, and connective phrases from your reading. Bring to the class examples of sentences and paragraphs which illustrate their use.

16. Bring to the class two examples of paragraphs in which it would be difficult to follow the thought if the conjunctions, conjunctive adverbs, and connective phrases were omitted.

17. Find examples of paragraphs in which pronouns and demonstratives show the transition from sentence to sentence.

18. Study the sequence of paragraphs in "The Smudge" (pp. 145–147). Write an outline of the exposition, indicating the substance of each paragraph. Observe the means by which transition is effected and coherence secured.

19. Study Carlyle's "Essay on Burns," or Burke's "Conciliation with America," with reference to the transition from paragraph to paragraph.

20. Prepare two paragraphs, the second explaining the effect of the action or event which the first describes.

21. Write four or five paragraphs on "Rain in Summer"; "The Character of Gurth" (in "Ivanhoe"); "The Character of Wamba"; "A Typical Norman Baron"; "A Saxon Gentleman"; "Macbeth's Banquet"; "Portia as a Lawyer"; "Rip Van Winkle's Return"; "Ichabod and the Headless Horseman"; "The Mainspring of a Watch." Give careful attention to unity, coherence, sequence of thought, and transition.

22. Study the extracts on pages 296–307 in connection with the methods of transition within the paragraph described on pages 293–296.

23. Illustrate in sentences of your own the use of the following particles (or phrases) of transition: — *however*, *on the contrary*, *nevertheless*, *therefore*, *also*, *in short*, *yet*, *hence*. Explain the force of each particle or phrase.

24. Study the first five paragraphs of Carlyle's "Essay on Burns," or Macaulay's "Essay on Boswell's 'Life of Johnson,'" with reference to unity, coherence, and transition within the paragraph. Note the use of transitional particles and phrases and of pronouns and demonstrative words (p. 294).

25. Examine each paragraph which you prepared in Exercise 21 with special reference to transition within the paragraph; or exchange compositions with a classmate for criticism.

26. Write three or four paragraphs of description on one of the following subjects, accumulating specific details (p. 298) in accordance with a definite plan: — "The Lonely Pool"; "Tom the Bootblack"; "A Sudden Squall"; The "Skating Rink"; "The Ruined Cottage"; "An Abandoned Farm"; "My Uncle's Chauffeur"; "The Indian Encampment"; "The Bargain Counter"; "A Wrecked Automobile"; "A Blockade in the City"; "The River in Flood."

27. Write a paragraph defining each of the following terms: — *a caucus*, *local option*, *the Monroe Doctrine*, *arbitration*, *tragedy*, *comedy*, *a sonnet*, *a philanthropist*, *an injunction*, *a stock company*, *a partnership*, *an armistice*, *a walking delegate*.

28. Write a paragraph on one of the subjects mentioned in Exercise 27, containing one or more examples or illustrations.

29. Write a paragraph combining a definition (see Exercise 27) with an example or illustration (see Exercise 28).

30. Write a paragraph comparing or contrasting: — a Mohawk and an Eskimo; an elephant and a camel; a pencil and a pen; rosewood and mahogany; a frog and a toad; a bird and a bat; generosity and lavishness; a policeman and a judge; an architect and a builder; wisdom and cunning.

31. Make a paragraph by developing or dwelling on one of the following sentences: — "Criticism is not faultfinding"; "Practice makes perfect"; "Misery is said to love company"; "He that is down need fear no fall"; "One may pay too much for the whistle"; "Most proverbs are only half true"; "War is a relic of barbarism."

CHAPTER II

SENTENCES

THE STRUCTURE OF SENTENCES

The guiding principle in the structure of sentences is simple: **a sentence should be so constructed as to assist the reader in grasping and following the thought.** This principle involves not only grammatical correctness, but also **clearness, unity,** and **variety.** It likewise involves a due regard to smoothness and agreeable writing and to the proper distribution of **emphasis.** Carelessness in any of these particulars thwarts and annoys the reader and may utterly defeat the writer's purpose.

The principle in question applies to every kind of composition, from a familiar letter to a novel, a drama, or a history.

UNITY OF THE SENTENCE

A sentence, whether long or short, should have **unity,** — that is, it should be a complete and consistent whole, all the parts of which stand in a proper relation to each other.

If we write, for example, "The natives of the Andaman Islands are said to have no knowledge of fire and to be unable to count higher than three," our sentence is a unit, for, though it contains two distinct statements, these stand in a manifest relation to each other. They are both illustrations of the extremely savage condition of the Andaman islanders.

If, on the other hand, we write, "The natives of the Andaman Islands are short of stature and are said to have no knowledge of fire," our sentence violates the principle of unity, for the stature of the islanders has nothing to do with their ignorance of fire.

The following sentences contain disconnected ideas and therefore violate unity: —

1. This fortress, which was situated upon a neck of land, was built by the Russians, who maintained the institution of serfdom until very recent times.

2. The runaway horse came tearing down Washington Street, which was of course named after the Father of his Country.

3. The Indians had the reputation of being cruel and revengeful, and their chief crop was maize, which is also known as Indian corn.

4. Gunpowder was invented by the Chinese, who are very fond of rice.

5. The murder was committed by means of an axe, and the criminal was arrested at the house of his brother-in-law.

6. The Athenians lived in Attica and probably received their alphabet from the Phœnicians.

7. The sea looks beautiful in the sunlight, and is very useful for the passage of ships.

8. Rip Van Winkle was a lazy fellow and he met with a surprising adventure, as a result of which he slept for twenty years in the Kaatskills, which are now a favorite resort.

The disregard of unity in the foregoing examples is so glaring as to be ridiculous. Often, however, in a long sentence, with modifying clauses, this principle is violated in a less obvious, though equally flagrant, way. Thus, —

1. The old Sunday Blue Law was framed to meet public sentiment many years ago and conditions which existed at that time, and the legislature ought to recognize this change of conditions and amend the laws to a certain extent, so that the laws may be enforced and respected, not be made ridiculous by their enforcement. — Student's Theme.

2. Another dramatic incident to show the imperative need of two men in the engine cab on the great trains when the congressional limited train on the Pennsylvania ran through Philadelphia last night at terrific speed with the engineer, Joseph Toms, dead at the throttle, until the fireman climbed over the boiler to find his head was hanging out of the cab window, crushed by striking some obstacle. — NEWSPAPER.

Both of these sentences illustrate **incoherency** as well as lack of unity. Illustrations of these faults need not be multiplied, for the student will have no difficulty in finding examples for himself.

THE PRINCIPLE OF VARIETY

Variety in the length and structure of sentences is necessary, not only for the sake of smoothness, but also to render our meaning clear and to distribute the emphasis properly. Sameness (or **monotony**) of style is a fatal fault in composition, for it takes the life out of the most interesting subject. **Variety,** on the other hand, stimulates the attention and lends a certain attractiveness to the driest subject.

We may test the principle of variety by looking into our own minds and observing how they work in the everyday processes of thought. An easy experiment will show that these operations are very complicated.

If you watch your own thoughts you will find that, *while you read these words*, there are in the background of your mind other ideas and feelings. For example, you see the white page with black marks on it; you feel the weight of the book and the texture of the cover in your hand; you know whether the room is warm or cold; you hear noises outside, — a dog barking, a hand organ, the rumble and hum of an electric car, a footstep in the hall. These things all occupy your mind in some degree, along

with the sense of what you are reading. Moreover, the very words *dog barking*, or *electric car*, may remind you of something that you did yesterday or intend to do to-morrow. All the time, too, your thoughts are busy, putting together what you read, and applying its principles to the compositions that you may have to write.

As we do different things, — study, write, play games, walk or ride in the country, — the contents of the mind will be different. Sometimes they will seem to be nothing but thoughts; sometimes nothing but the sensations of the things about us; sometimes chiefly memories of things and people in the past; sometimes chiefly the desire to do something in the future. Always, however, this "stream of consciousness," as the philosophers call it, will be in constant change and motion; and, though it may sometimes seem entirely simple, it will in reality be complex, — made up, as it were, of different layers of thought and sensation. To express our thoughts clearly, then, must require great variety in the means of expression.[1]

Read Hawthorne's "Tanglewood Porch" (pp. 391–393) and notice the ease and the variety of his sentences. Some are long, others short. In some, the meaning is held in suspense until the last word is reached; in others, there is a succession of clauses and phrases, after any one of which you could stop without injuring the sense. Some of them ramble on in the most natural way; others lead up to an important word at the end. Everywhere we find ease, grace, and flexibility of expression.

The charm of Hawthorne's style consists, in great part, in this adaptation of sentence structure to every turn of

[1] The purpose of this simple experiment in psychology is to enforce the inevitable connection between the processes of thought and the principles of composition. The student will observe that variety in sentence structure is not a mere trick of rhetoric, but a natural development, growing out of the complexity of human thought.

thought and fancy. There is no apparent striving after variety for its own sake.

In fact, however, such ease and grace are not attained, even by the great writers, without a long apprenticeship to the art of composition. Before Hawthorne could trust his pen to follow his mind through all its "forthrights and meanders," he had to familiarize himself, by constant practice, with the almost infinite possibilities of the English sentence. This done, he commanded his phrases and sentences as a violinist commands his wrist and fingers in playing his instrument.

NOTE. — For evidence of the pains and trouble which distinguished authors have had to take in learning how to express themselves, see Swift's "Works," edited by Scott, Vol. XV, p. 252; Franklin's "Autobiography," Bigelow's edition, Vol. I, Part I, pp. 109 ff.; Trevelyan's "Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay," New York, 1898, Vol. II, pp. 191–204; Stevenson's essay entitled "A College Magazine," in his "Memories and Portraits"; Darwin's "Life and Letters," New York, 1887, Vol. I, p. 80. The passage in Darwin is interesting with respect to the method of arranging an exposition.

The free syntax of our language, together with its large and diversified stock of words, makes variety an easy merit in English writing; for the same idea may often be expressed in several different ways by changing the grammatical construction.

Examples[1] of "equivalent constructions" are: adjectives, adjective phrases, and adjective clauses (§§ 121–123, 204–207); adverbs, adverbial phrases, and adverbial clauses (§§ 124–131, 195–200); nouns and noun clauses (§§ 208–211); active and passive (§§ 464–466); nouns and infinitives (§§ 448, 533–536); infinitives and clauses of purpose and result (§§ 585–589); infinitive clauses (§§ 611–617); clauses of cause, time, place, and circumstance, and the nominative absolute (§§ 492–495).

[1] The references are to "The Mother Tongue," Book II, where the constructions in question are defined and illustrated.

KINDS OF SENTENCES

Sentences, as we have learned in our study of grammar, may be **simple, compound,** or **complex.** Each of these forms gives a different turn to the thought expressed. We must therefore consider the special character and value of each, and how each may be made useful in writing.

Since the form of a sentence helps to show the relations between the ideas expressed, it is evident that skill in constructing sentences is of direct aid in the expression of our thought; and, on the other hand, that an inappropriate form of sentence may obscure the meaning as much as a wrong word. We should train ourselves, therefore, to use different kinds of sentences until they are as thoroughly at our command as our vocabulary, so that each thought will flow naturally and automatically into the mould best suited to express it.

SIMPLE SENTENCES

The value of **short simple sentences** in connected writing consists chiefly in their power to produce **emphasis;** but a style consisting of such sentences alone is likely to be both tiresome and uncouth.

The force of simple sentences, when properly employed, may be seen from the following paragraph on Liberty from Macaulay's "Essay on Milton": —

Ariosto tells a pretty story of a fairy, who, by some mysterious law of her nature, was condemned to appear at certain seasons in the form of a foul and poisonous snake. Those who injured her during the period of her disguise were forever excluded from participation in the blessings which she bestowed. But to those who, in spite of her loathsome aspect, pitied and protected her, she afterwards revealed herself in the beautiful and celestial form

which was natural to her, accompanied their steps, granted all their wishes, filled their houses with wealth, made them happy in love and victorious in war. *Such a spirit is Liberty. At times she takes the form of a hateful reptile.* She grovels, she hisses, she stings. But woe to those who in disgust shall venture to crush her! And happy are those who, having dared to receive her in her degraded and frightful shape, shall at length be rewarded by her in the time of her beauty and her glory!

Observe the two short simple sentences, "Such a spirit is Liberty. At times she takes the form of a hateful reptile." Coming, as they do, after several longer sentences, they are singularly emphatic by reason of their brevity and directness. Thus it appears that a **short simple sentence,** without many modifiers, is of great service when we wish to make an important fact or idea stand out prominently in the reader's mind, and that its effectiveness is increased when it comes into contrast with other sentences of greater length and complexity.

A short simple sentence is often used at the beginning of a paragraph to state the subject, as in the following passage from Goldsmith: —

Few virtues have been more praised by moralists than generosity. Every practical treatise of ethics tends to increase our sensibility of the distresses of others, and to relax the grasp of frugality. Philosophers that are poor praise it, because they are gainers by its effects; and the opulent Seneca himself has written a treatise on benefits, though he was known to give nothing away.

For other examples of this use of simple sentences see pages 283–284.

A short simple sentence is also effective at the end of a paragraph to sum up or enforce the thought that has been dwelt on and developed in what precedes. This effectiveness is enhanced if the sentence is pithy and epigrammatic.

Thus Thackeray closes a long paragraph on the motives of studying history as follows: —

I take up a volume of Doctor Smollett, or a volume of the "Spectator," and say the fiction carries a greater amount of truth in solution than the volume which purports to be all true. Out of the fictitious book I get the expression of the life of the time; of the manners, of the movement, the dress, the pleasures, the laughter, the ridicules of society, — the old times live again, and I travel in the old country of England. *Can the heaviest historian do more for me?* [1]

For other examples of the method of closing a paragraph with a short sentence, see pages 284–285.

Again, a **series of short sentences** is often forcible.

In the sixth paragraph of Macaulay's "Siege of Arcot" (p. 397), there is a series of five short sentences beginning with the words *Rajah Sahib*. Such a series gives an effect of suspense and excitement which could be produced in no other way.

There is one risk, however, in using a series of short sentences: the passage may sound disjointed or "jerky."

This fault Macaulay avoids with great skill. For several lines he changes the sentence structure as little as possible. In four successive short sentences he keeps our attention on Rajah Sahib, the subject of the first; and in two of them, with the longer sentence which follows, he uses the same subject (*he*). Thus the thought is so closely connected by means of the likeness in structure that the series of short sentences does not seem disjointed.

For other examples of a series of short sentences, see the extracts from Charles Lamb (p. 122), Dr. John Brown (p. 180), and Macaulay (p. 305).

NOTE. — Too great stress should not be laid on the grammatical distinction between simple and compound sentences. The difference in rhetorical effect between short compound sentences and simple sentences of about the same length is often very slight. The effect produced by the compound sentences is somewhat more flowing, by the simple sentences what musicians would call more *staccato*.

[1] From "The English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century."

COMPOUND SENTENCES

A **compound sentence** affords the simplest means of expressing two or more ideas in combination as a single idea of a more comprehensive kind. This form of sentence structure is, in fact, an indication to the reader that the clauses are not to be taken separately, as the expression of unrelated facts, but are to fall together in his mind as parts of a larger whole.

The manner in which the clauses are joined points out their bearing on each other. If we use *and* to connect them, we indicate that they have the same general bearing, — that they are simply to be regarded as component parts of a larger unit. *But*, on the other hand, shows that the clause that follows is opposed to that which precedes. *Or* signifies that the clauses are alternatives; *for*, that one gives the reason of the other. Finally, if we employ a colon, a semicolon, or a comma instead of a connective, we indicate merely that the ideas should be taken together, but we do not define their relation to each other.

Newman's "Definition of a Gentleman" (p. 399) illustrates the proper function of **compound sentences.**

Here the author has to enumerate a great many qualities and habits which together make up the character that he is describing, and which, in his estimation, are all of nearly equal importance. Hence he uses many compound sentences; for in such a sentence the clauses are **coördinate,** — that is, of equal order or rank.

ABUSE OF COMPOUND SENTENCES

The commonest abuse of compound sentences comes from indolence and vague thinking, and results in an intolerable sameness of style. Nothing is more tiresome and monotonous than a string of unselected coördinate

clauses loosely held together by *and*'s. Such a style betrays the writer's lack of discrimination. It shows that he distinguishes neither the comparative importance of the statements that he makes nor their logical relation to each other in the expression of his thought.

An extreme instance of this abuse is the slovenly habit, in telling a story, of tacking all the sentences together with *and*'s, no matter whether they contain important details or not. Thus the reader's attention is frittered away on trivial facts, until he feels as if he were ploughing his way through drifts of dust. Such crude coördination is very different from the solidity and directness which gives power to the biblical style.

The same fault is illustrated by the trick of writing in isolated compound sentences, each consisting of two clauses joined by this same conjunction *and*, as in the following passage from an essay on the system of training crews at a large university: —

> Gradually the candidates are rounded into form and those having greater aptitude show greater and greater improvement. The most elementary work is over and now it becomes necessary to devote more attention to each man personally. The class is yet very large and this can be done only by weeding out the ones that are most backward. No preference is shown and any man showing up well will be retained. The method is entirely competitive and every one is given an equal chance.

Here we have ten consecutive statements, uniformly arranged in coördinated pairs. The passage is so monotonous and uninteresting that it is hard to keep the mind awake while we read it. Further, the ill-judged coördination obscures the two points that the writer is endeavoring to make: (1) that the system leads to a gradual selection of the best men, and (2) that in this selection every one has a fair chance.

The passage might be rewritten as follows: —

Gradually, as the elementary work is over and the candidates are rounded into form, those who have greater aptitude show greater and greater improvement. It now becomes necessary to devote more attention to each man personally; but, inasmuch as the class is still very large, this can be done only by weeding out those who are most backward. Since the method is entirely competitive and no preference is shown, any man who promises well is retained. Every one has an equal chance.

In this new form no attempt has been made to strike out the repetitions, and few changes have been made in the feeble wording of the original; but now the two main points stand out conspicuously. As you read the passage, you grasp its meaning without effort; for the statements are so arranged by means of the sentence structure that the important facts cannot fail to catch the attention.

It is important to remember that coördination is not a rhetorical fault. We should carefully distinguish between those cases in which this structure best expresses the thought and those in which it represents no thought at all.

COMPLEX SENTENCES

Thought is not a simple process. The experiment on page 313 has shown us that the idea on which our attention is fixed at a given moment is always accompanied and followed by other ideas which color or modify it. The relations among these ideas are often so complicated that simple and even compound sentences provide no adequate means of expressing them. Yet they must be expressed. Hence language, adapting itself to the ever-growing complexity of thought, has wrought out the **complex sentence.**

Compare a young child and a trained naturalist engaged in observing the same occurrence.

The child sees the main act and is content with expressing it in a simple sentence, — "My cat caught a rat."

The man of science notes many other significant details. In the build of the cat, in its manner of crouching and swishing its tail, in the stripes of its fur, in the way in which its claws are hidden in the cushions, he detects its relation to the other feline animals, — such as the lion, the tiger, and the panther. His thought is therefore far more complicated than the child's, and accordingly his expression of that thought requires a complex sentence. He might say, perhaps, "Since the cat belongs to the feline race, it crouches and springs when it catches a rat"; or, "The cat, as it crouches beside the rat-hole, shows the same instinct that prompts a tiger to hide in the jungle near a pool to which the deer come to drink."

If the naturalist had only simple or compound sentences to use, he would find it well-nigh impossible to indicate the relations between the various facts as they lie in his mind. "The cat crouches by the rat-hole; the tiger crouches by a pool in the jungle; the deer come to the pool to drink; the cat and the tiger have the same instinct," would be a ludicrously insufficient expression of the thought which he wishes to convey.

The history of language is much like the experience of a child learning to talk. In both cases, the order of development is from simple sentences to compound, and from compound sentences to complex. The growth is natural, not artificial; and the development of sentence structure has simply kept pace with the development of the human intellect.

In this process of linguistic development, the numerous subordinating words (relative pronouns, relative adverbs and subordinate conjunctions) have acquired their present functions. The variety of these words and their manifold use show how essential the complex sentence has become in the expression of thought.

Our study of grammar has already made us acquainted with the different kinds of subordinate clauses and with the ideas that they convey. The pronoun, adverb, or conjunction that introduces the subordinate clause serves, in each case, as a kind of signpost to point the way which the reader's mind is to take. Thus, *because* indicates that the subordinate clause that follows gives the cause or reason of the statement made in the main clause; *in order that* suggests purpose; *though*, concession; *if*, condition, and so on.

PERIODIC AND LOOSE SENTENCES

Sometimes the different parts of our thought are so various, and yet so intimately related, that, without a complex sentence, which knits together the different strands by means of subordinate clauses, participial phrases, and similar modifiers, we should find it impossible to bring our meaning to an adequate expression. At other times, our ideas take shape one by one, in orderly sequence, but without combining, or much affecting each other, and accordingly our sentences fall naturally into the compound structure, and their parts are held together by coördinate conjunctions.

In the former case, the sense and the grammatical construction may be so **suspended** that neither is complete until the last word of the sentence is reached. Such a sentence is said to be **periodic.** In the latter case, we can stop at one or more points before we come to the end, and the sentence is still grammatically complete. Such a sentence is said to be **loose.** The same distinction is made in the structure of individual clauses.

The first sentence in the last paragraph but one is **periodic**, the second is **loose.**

It is important to remark that the adjective *loose* in this sense is merely a technical term describing a kind of sentence structure. It carries no suggestion of reproach. Loose sentences are just as proper as periodic sentences. In fact, the natural tendency of our language is particularly favorable to them, as the natural tendency of Latin is favorable to the periodic structure. Comparatively few English sentences are periodic throughout, though many are partly so and single clauses are often built on the periodic plan. Excessive periodicity is stilted; excessive looseness is slovenly. The best style is that which adapts the form of the sentences easily and spontaneously to the character of the thought expressed.

Let us examine the following passage from Thackeray's "Pendennis": —

Shortly after Strong had quitted the room, and whilst Mr. Pen, greatly irate at his downfall in the waltz, which made him look ridiculous in the eyes of the nation, and by Miss Amory's behavior to him, which had still further insulted his dignity, was endeavoring to get some coolness of body and temper by looking out of window towards the sea, which was sparkling in the distance, and murmuring in a wonderful calm, — whilst he was really trying to compose himself, and owning to himself, perhaps, that he had acted in a very absurd and peevish manner during the night, — he felt a hand on his shoulder; and, on looking round, beheld to his utter surprise and horror, that the hand in question belonged to Monsieur Mirobolant, whose eyes were glaring out of his pale face and ringlets at Mr. Pen. To be tapped on the shoulder by a French cook was a piece of familiarity which made the blood of the Pendennises to boil up in the veins of their descendant, and he was astounded, almost more than enraged, at such an indignity.

The first sentence in this passage is periodic as far as *a hand on his shoulder*. The author, wishing us to comprehend Pen's frame of mind at the moment when Mirobolant ventured to be familiar, does not allow our minds to

close the thought until he has brought together all the details which contributed to that frame of mind. The rest of the sentence is looser in structure. The second sentence is partly periodic and partly loose. Both are excellent, and neither is better than the other.

An excellent specimen of a loose sentence may be taken from the same page of "Pendennis."

"The consequences are that I will fling you out of window, you impudent scoundrel," bawled out Mr. Pen; and, darting upon the Frenchman, he would very likely have put his threat into execution, for the window was at hand, and the artist by no means a match for the young gentleman — had not Captain Broadfoot and another heavy officer flung themselves between the combatants, — had not the ladies begun to scream, — had not the fiddle stopped, — had not the crowd of people come running in that direction, — had not Laura, with a face of great alarm, looked over their heads and asked for Heaven's sake what was wrong, — had not the opportune Strong made his appearance from the refreshment-room, and found Alcide grinding his teeth and jabbering oaths in his Gascon French, and Pen looking uncommonly wicked, although trying to appear as calm as possible when the ladies and the crowd came up.

Here the long succession of clauses, added one after another, is well adapted to express the swift succession of events. In this sentence, then, the loose structure is preferable to the periodic.

These two sentences from the same page of a great master of English may serve to counteract the erroneous notion that a loose sentence is a bad sentence, or indicative of looseness of thought. The term is an unfortunate one, but is fixed in the technical vocabulary of rhetoric. Loose sentences are prevalent in the very best authors, and strictly periodic sentences are correspondingly rare. Modern English style tends distinctly toward moderate looseness and away from elaborate periodicity.

One form of looseness in complex sentences is particularly objectionable. English is fond of relative constructions, and there is, in grammatical theory, no limit to the number of relative clauses that a complex sentence may include. In practice, however, we must take care not to multiply such clauses excessively. A long chain of relatives (as in "The House that Jack Built") gives a sentence the air of running on forever because it does not know where to stop. Unity is pretty sure to be violated. The effect is not only ungraceful but extremely confusing, and may even become ridiculous, as the intention is in the nursery tale just mentioned.

EMPHASIS IN SENTENCES

In speaking, we use **emphasis,** or stress of the voice, to assist the hearer in understanding exactly what we mean. In writing, it is not always easy to indicate such emphasis. Yet, unless the reader knows which words or phrases are meant to be emphatic, he may lose the effect of a whole sentence. In verse the metre is of assistance. In prose we must trust much to the reader's intelligence, but some help is afforded by the **order of words.**

The following examples show how any variation from the simplest order makes a difference in emphasis. Thus, in the first example, the object is put before the subject and the verb; in the fourth, an adverb comes first, and the subject follows *was;* in the thirteenth, the adverbial modifier *for an instant* begins the sentence.

1. Such evil sin hath wrought. — Cowper.

2. In the night it blew very hard, and a great sea tumbled in upon the shore; but, being extremely fatigued, we in the boats went to sleep. — Admiral Byron.

3. Think, when we talk of horses, that you see them
Printing their proud hoofs i' the receiving earth.
SHAKSPERE.

4. Never was such a sudden scholar made. — SHAKSPERE.

5. Some war, some plague, some famine they foresee. — POPE.

6. The fur that warms a monarch, warmed a bear. — POPE.

7. Eleven months, at different times, have I passed at Florence. — GRAY.

8. There, fast rooted in their bank,
Stand, never overlooked, our favorite elms. — COWPER.

9. With blackest moss the flower-pots
Were thickly crusted, one and all. — TENNYSON.

10. Of political wisdom, indeed, in its larger and more generous sense, Elizabeth had little or none; but her political tact was unerring. — J. R. GREEN.

11. By this treaty, the condition of the war with the Dutch was widely altered. — SWIFT.

12. In this uncertainty, he rode up to the little wicket of Alice's garden. — SCOTT.

13. For an instant after entering the room, the guest stood still, retaining Hepzibah's hand, instinctively, as a child does that of the grown person who guides it. — HAWTHORNE.

14. Of all the wars which have had a permanent influence upon the civil history of mankind, none could so little be anticipated by human prudence as that effected by the religion of Arabia.
HALLAM.

Variations in the order of words for the sake of emphasis cannot be reduced to hard-and-fast rules. Three special points, however, deserve notice: —

1. A word, phrase, or clause is often emphasized by coming before the subject of the sentence, as in several of the examples above.

2. The subject and the predicate verb may, one or both, become emphatic when they change places in the sentence or clause. This arrangement is called "the inverted order."

1. Back darted Spurius Lartius;
Herminius darted back. — MACAULAY.

2. Then up rose Mrs. Cratchit, Cratchit's wife, dressed out but poorly in a twice-turned gown, but brave in ribbons, which are cheap and make a goodly show for sixpence. — DICKENS.

3. So pass the sultry dog-days, in the most electric manner, and the whole month of July. — CARLYLE.

4. In such bodies, existing by purchase for ready money, there could not be excess of public spirit; there might well be excess of eagerness to divide the public spoil. — CARLYLE.

5. This mad excitement over, there returned, with tenfold force, the dreadful consciousness of his crime. — DICKENS.

6. Below them, from the gull-rock, rose a thousand birds, and filled the air with sound. — CHARLES KINGSLEY.

7. There came a day when the round of decorous pleasures and solemn gaieties in which Mr. Joseph Sedley's family indulged, was interrupted by an event which happens in most houses.

THACKERAY.

8. There was at first a deep silence, and then a rushing sound, or a noise like a long sigh, proceeding out of the interior of the earth. — HAWTHORNE.

9. Here lies the sweet bay, gleaming peaceful in the rosy sunshine; green islands dip here and there in its waters; purple mountains swell circling round it; and towards them, rising from the bay, stretches a rich green plain, fruitful with herbs and various foliage, in the midst of which the white houses twinkle.

THACKERAY.

3. The end of a clause or sentence is often an emphatic position.[1] Thus, —

1. About a month since, I had a letter from one whom you remember, and from whom I little expected to hear, — James Nichols. — COWPER.

2. When we consider either the history of opinion, or the ordinary conduct of human life, to what is it to be ascribed that the one and the other are no worse than they are? — J. S. MILL.

3. The modern modes of travelling cannot compare with the old mail-coach system in grandeur and power. — DE QUINCEY.

4. That a historian should not record trifles, that he should confine himself to what is important, is perfectly true. But many

[1] Compare **climax** (pp. 334–336).

writers seem never to have considered on what the historical importance of an event depends. — MACAULAY.

5. But it is not only the difficulty and labor which men take in finding out of truth, — nor, again, that, when it is found, it imposeth upon men's thoughts, — that doth bring lies in favor; but a natural though corrupt love of the lie itself. — BACON.

6. It must needs be a great wonder to those that think the "Letters" genuine, how or where they were concealed, in what secret cave or unknown corner of the world, so that nobody ever heard of them for a thousand years together. — BENTLEY.

In attempting to secure emphasis by departing from the usual order of words, we should take care not to make our sentences sound either harsh or unnatural. The poets are very free in this respect, but prose writers, though they have all the liberty they need, must refrain from violent distortions, unless they wish to be accused of affectation and mannerism.

Emphasis may be indicated by the structure of a **complex sentence.**

Contrast the following sentences: —

The constitution was adopted by all the states, and Washington was elected president.

After the constitution was adopted by all the states, Washington was elected president.

The constitution was adopted by all the states before Washington was elected president.

The first sentence is compound; the second and third are complex. In the first, there is no distinction of emphasis between the two clauses. In the second, the emphasis is thrown on the election of Washington; in the third, on the adoption of the constitution. Thus, by the change of a single word, it is possible to throw one or another statement into stronger relief, since the emphasis naturally rests on the main clause.

ANTITHESIS

Antithesis (that is, "opposition") is a contrast[1] between different ideas or thoughts, whether these are expressed in single words or in groups of words. The antithesis is often emphasized by putting the contrasted words, phrases, or clauses in the same relative position in the sentence, — that is, by **parallelism of arrangement.** Thus, —

Talent is power, tact is skill; talent is weight, tact is momentum. Talent knows what to do, tact knows how to do it; talent makes a man respectable, tact will make him respected; talent is wealth, tact is ready money.

Here the difference between *talent* and *tact* is made evident almost as much by the structure of the sentence as by the antithetical words.

Skilful use of antithesis produces an effect of epigrammatic pungency; excessive use of it, an effect of shallow cleverness.

In the following examples of antithesis, there is sometimes parallelism of arrangement and sometimes not: —

1. I am the last of noble Edward's sons,
   Of whom thy father, prince of Wales, was first.
   In war, was never lion raged more fierce;
   In peace, was never gentle lamb more mild.
   SHAKSPERE.
2. If all the year were playing holidays,
   To sport would be as tedious as to work. — SHAKSPERE.
3. See the same man in vigor, in the gout;
   Alone, in company; in place, or out;
   Early at business, and at hazard late;
   Mad at a fox-chase, wise at a debate. — POPE.
4. Tom struts a soldier, open, bold and brave;
   Will sneaks a scrivener, an exceeding knave. — POPE.

[1] Compare what is said of contrast in description (pp. 122 ff.) and exposition (pp. 182 ff.). Such contrasts are regularly brought out by antithesis.

5. His spirit was active, but his pen had been indolent.
GIBBON.

6. Envy, which is the canker of honor, is best extinguished by declaring a man's self in his ends rather to seek merit than fame, and by attributing a man's successes rather to divine providence and felicity than to his own virtue or policy. — BACON.

7. Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider. — BACON.

8. He will beard a superstition, and shudder at the old phantom while he does it. One could imagine him cracking a jest in the teeth of a ghost, and then melting into thin air himself out of sympathy with the awful. — LEIGH HUNT.

9. The good are befriended by weakness and defect. As no man ever had a point of pride that was not injurious to him, so no man ever had a defect that was not somewhere made useful to him. The stag in the fable admired his horns and blamed his feet; but when the hunter came, his feet saved him, and afterwards, caught in the thicket, his horns destroyed him. — EMERSON.

10. Compare the two. This I offer to give you is plain and simple: the other full of perplexed and intricate mazes. This is mild, that harsh. This is found by experience effectual for its purposes: the other is a new project. This is universal: the other calculated for certain colonies only. This is immediate in its conciliatory operation: the other remote, contingent, full of hazard. Mine is what becomes the dignity of a ruling people, — gratuitous, unconditional, and not held out as a matter of bargain and sale.
BURKE.

11. What Virgil wrote in the vigor of his age, in plenty and at ease, I have undertaken to translate in my declining years; struggling with wants, oppressed with sickness, curbed in my genius, liable to be misconstrued in all I write; and my judges, if they are not very equitable, already prejudiced against me by the lying character which has been given them of my morals. — DRYDEN.

It should be observed that, as antithesis does not require parallelism in arrangement, so parallelism does not imply antithesis.

BALANCED SENTENCES

Balance is of the same nature as **antithesis**, except that it does not necessarily imply a comparison or contrast. Two phrases or clauses are **balanced** when they have a similar form, are of about the same length, and bear about the same weight of emphasis. Thus, —

It is good also not to try experiments in states, except the necessity be urgent, or the utility evident; and well to beware that it be the reformation that draweth on the change, and not the desire of change that pretendeth the reformation. — BACON.

Here, in the first clause, *the necessity be urgent* is balanced by *the utility evident;* in the second clause, *the reformation that draweth on the change* is balanced by *the desire of change that pretendeth the reformation;* and the whole of the second clause balances the whole of the first. The ideas are thus reinforced and their relations emphasized by the sound of the sentence. At the same time, it may be noted, the two parts of the second clause are in **antithesis.**

Other examples of **balance** are the following: —

1. Every one must, in the walks of life, have met with men of whom all speak with censure, though they are not chargeable with any crime, and whom none can be persuaded to love, though a reason can scarcely be assigned why they should be hated.

JOHNSON.

2. Next to seeing you is the pleasure of seeing your handwriting; next to hearing you is the pleasure of hearing from you.

GRAY.

3. Such a question might perhaps discompose the gravity of his muscles, but I believe it would little affect the tranquillity of his conscience. — JUNIUS.

4. We do not think it has any great value as a history; nor is it very admirable as a piece of composition. It comprehends too short a period, and includes too few events, to add much to our

knowledge of facts, and abounds too little with splendid passages to lay much hold on the imagination. — JEFFREY.

5. There is the same difference betwixt farce and comedy as betwixt an empiric and a true physician: both of them may attain their ends; but what one performs by hazard, the other does by skill. — DRYDEN.

6. To conclude, my lords, if the ministers thus persevere in misadvising and misleading the king, I will not say that they can alienate the affections of his subjects from his crown; but I will affirm that they will make the crown not worth his wearing: I will not say that the king is betrayed; but I will pronounce that the kingdom is undone. — CHATHAM.

7. It is not common to meet with a writer who can make you smile, and yet at nobody's expense; who is always entertaining, and yet always harmless; and who, though always elegant, and classical to a degree not always found even in the classics themselves, charms more by the simplicity and playfulness of his ideas than by the neatness and purity of his verse. — COWPER.

Balance lends dignity to style and **antithesis** lends point. Both are therefore common in serious essays and in orations (see p. 365), as well as in poetry. Their excessive use, however, results in a formal and stilted diction.

Balance must occur, to an appreciable degree, in any writing that is not utterly formless; for it corresponds to natural movements of thought and feeling, and therefore plays an important part in the natural, irregular rhythm of prose. When it is unobtrusive, and — as it were — unconscious, the effect is almost always agreeable. Exact and studied balance, however, should be used with caution, and only occasionally. Otherwise one's style becomes not only stilted but monotonous, and the reader's attention is dulled instead of being stimulated. Only in writing of a formal and stately character (such as a brief address of ceremony) is it allowable to make rhetorical balance a governing principle of composition.

In the Book of Job and the Psalms balanced clauses and sentences are the rule, since this method of structure was characteristic of Hebrew poetry. The rhythmic effect of constant balance may therefore be studied to the best advantage in those books of the Bible. For example: —

For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him.

PSALM LV. 12.

Behold, thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands.

Thy words have upholden him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees.

But now it is come upon thee, and thou faintest; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled. — JOB, IV. 3–5.

These extracts are specimens of the most majestic prose which our language affords, but they are, for obvious reasons, not models for imitation in ordinary modern writing.

CLIMAX

Climax is a method of construction by which words, phrases, clauses, or sentences are arranged in the order of their importance or emphasis, the most important or emphatic coming last. Thus, in Bacon's famous sentence, "Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested," the second kind of books is clearly more important than the first, and the third is strongly emphasized by being mentioned after the other two.

A climax should proceed in a regular ascending series; there must be no falling off in the emphasis at any point. If Bacon's sentence is so transposed as to read, "A few books are to be chewed and digested, some to be tasted,

others to be swallowed," the point will be obscured or lost altogether. In general, at least three words or clauses are necessary to produce a climax.

Examples of climax follow: —

1. Horses did neigh, and dying men did groan,
And ghosts did shriek and squeal about the streets.
SHAKSPERE.

2. Say I feared Cæsar, honored him, and loved him.
SHAKSPERE.

3. Thy palate then did deign
The roughest berry on the rudest hedge;
Yea, like the stag when snow the pasture sheets,
The barks of trees thou browsed'st; on the Alps,
It is reported, thou didst eat strange flesh,
Which some did die to look on. — SHAKSPERE.

4. The steed is vanished from the stall;
No serf is seen in Hassan's hall;
The lonely spider's thin gray pall
Waves slowly widening o'er the wall. — BYRON.

5. He is invited to Edinburgh; hastens thither with anticipating heart; is welcomed as in a triumph, and with universal blandishment and acclamation. — CARLYLE.

6. The hired laborer of yesterday labors on his own account to-day, and will hire others to labor for him to-morrow. — LINCOLN.

7. As you became minister by accident, were adopted without choice, trusted without confidence, and continued without favor, be assured that, whenever an occasion presses, you will be discarded without even the form of regret. — JUNIUS.

For paragraphs constructed on the principle of the climax see page 296.

The method of the climax may also govern the structure of a whole composition, as we have already learned in the case of stories.

An arrangement in which the least important member of a series comes last is called an **anticlimax,** — that is, a

"climax reversed." It is a common rhetorical fault, but may be utilized occasionally to produce a comic or satirical effect. Thus, —

> The very knocker filled his soul with dread,
> As if it had a living lion's mouth,
> With teeth so terrible, and tongue so red,
> In which he had engaged to put his head.
> The bell-pull turned his courage into vapor,
> As though 't would cause a shower-bath to shed
> Its thousand shocks, to make him sigh and caper,—
> He looked askance, and *did not like the scraper.* — HOOD.

In the following example, climax is humorously followed by anticlimax: —

> I was yesterday invited by a gentleman to dinner, who promised that our entertainment should consist of a haunch of venison, a turtle, and a great man. I came according to appointment. The venison was fine, the turtle good, but the great man was insupportable. — GOLDSMITH.

PARALLEL STRUCTURE

We have already seen that **parallel structure** is an important element in the balanced sentence and that it adds point to antithesis. Climax may likewise involve this structure (see the sentences on page 335).

Parallel structure in a number of successive sentences is useful when several facts are to be stated which all make to the same end or effect. Newman's "Definition of a Gentleman" (pp. 399–400) affords numerous examples. Compare also the following passages: —

> In that spot, then very secluded, [Sir William] Temple passed the remainder of his life. The air agreed with him. The soil was fruitful, and well suited to an experimental farmer and

gardener. The grounds were laid out with the angular regularity which Sir William had admired in the flower beds of Haarlem and the Hague. — MACAULAY.

Sir, during that state of things, Parliament was not idle. They attempted to subdue the fierce spirit of the Welsh by all sorts of rigorous laws. They prohibited by statute the sending all sorts of arms into Wales, as you prohibit by proclamation (with something more of doubt on the legality) the sending arms to America. They disarmed the Welsh by statute, as you attempted (but still with more question on the legality) to disarm New England by an instruction. They made an act to drag offenders from Wales into England for trial, as you have done (but with more hardship) with regard to America. . . . They made acts to restrain trade, as you do; and they prevented the Welsh from the use of fairs and markets, as you do the Americans from fisheries and foreign ports. In short, when the statute-book was not quite so much swelled as it is now, you find no less than fifteen acts of penal regulation on the subject of Wales. — BURKE.

If the parallel structure is too long continued, or if it is employed when the several facts are not strictly parallel in meaning, it produces an effect of monotony and poverty of thought. When properly used, it enhances not only perspicuity, but also expressiveness of style.

It is to be noted that **antithesis, balance, climax,** and **parallel structure** are not mutually exclusive terms. They may all apply to the same passage, and it is therefore unwise to insist on hair-splitting distinctions. Antithesis is abundantly exemplified in Bacon's "Essays" and Johnson's "Lives of the Poets" (see especially the famous parallel between Dryden and Pope at the end of the "Life of Pope"). Macaulay is fond of parallel structure and climax. Stevenson's writings are characterized by constant use of subtle balance. Style grows more formal as these qualities become more obviously frequent.

RHETORICAL QUESTIONS

Not all questions are asked for the sake of getting information. Often the speaker or writer does not expect or wish to be answered, but puts what he has to say into the form of an inquiry merely to make it more emphatic, as a kind of challenge. Thus, —

Who would not love his country? [Practically equivalent to, There is no one who would not love his country.]

What is so base as avarice? [Equivalent to, Nothing is so base as avarice.]

What shall we do? [Equivalent to, We can do nothing.]

Who can tell? [Equivalent to, Nobody can tell.]

English knows no difference in form between such questions as these (called **rhetorical questions**) and questions which really ask for information.

Examples of rhetorical questions are the following: —

1. Art thou afeard
To be the same in thine own act and valor
As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting "I dare not" wait upon "I would,"
Like the poor cat i' the adage? — SHAKSPERE.

2. But the colonies will go further. Alas! alas! when will this speculating against fact and reason end? What will quiet these panic fears which we entertain of the hostile effect of a conciliatory conduct? — BURKE.

3. Is it true that no case can exist in which it is proper for the sovereign to accede to the desires of his discontented subjects? Is there anything peculiar in this case to make a rule for itself? Is all authority of course lost, when it is not pushed to the extreme? Is it a certain maxim that the fewer causes of dissatisfaction are left by government, the more the subject will be inclined to resist and rebel? — BURKE.

4. Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world? — LINCOLN.

5. Would it have been quite amiable in me, sir, to interrupt this excellent good feeling? Must I not have been absolutely malicious, if I could have thrust myself forward to destroy sensations thus pleasing? — WEBSTER.

Sometimes a writer or speaker emphasizes an assertion by means of a series of direct questions which lead up to it, as in the following paragraph from Burke's "Conciliation with America": —

What did Parliament with this audacious address? Reject it as a libel? Treat it as an affront to government? Spurn it as a derogation from the rights of legislature? Did they toss it over the table? Did they burn it by the hands of the common hangman? They took the petition of grievance, all rugged as it was, without softening or temperament, unpurged of the original bitterness and indignation of complaint; they made it the very preamble to their act of redress and consecrated its principle to all ages in the sanctuary of legislation.

Here the point which Burke wishes to make is that Parliament accepted the principles laid down in a certain address and enacted them as law. He might simply have stated this as a fact. Instead, he brings it in as the answer to a series of impassioned questions, thus rendering his final assertion vastly more impressive.

The effectiveness of **rhetorical questions** in argument comes from their dramatic quality. They suggest **dialogue**, especially when the speaker both asks and answers them himself, as if he were playing two parts on the stage. They are not always impassioned; they may be mildly ironical or merely argumentative: but they are always to some extent dramatic, and, if used to excess, they tend to give one's style a theatrical air.

PUNCTUATION

Punctuation is a device for indicating to the eye the pauses and the modulations of the voice which do so much to make spoken language intelligible and expressive.[1] It is an imperfect device, to be sure, for no system of "points" can represent the infinite variety of these phenomena; but, such as it is, it assists the reader considerably and must therefore be carefully attended to. See if you can make sense out of the following passage: —

Thought and speech are inseparable from each other matter and expression are parts of one style is a thinking out into language this is what I have been laying down and this is literature not things not the verbal symbols of things not on the other hand mere words but thoughts expressed in language.

Now read the same passage, properly punctuated, as it came from the hand of the author (Newman), and you will appreciate the usefulness of punctuation.

Thought and speech are inseparable from each other. Matter and expression are parts of one: style is a thinking out into language. This is what I have been laying down, and this is literature; not *things*, not the verbal symbols of things; not, on the other hand, mere *words*; but thoughts expressed in language.

Punctuation, we observe, indicates the **natural grouping of the words** into phrases, clauses, and sentences, and this grouping is an essential part of the expression of thought.

The most important mark of punctuation is the **period,** since we need particularly to know where a sentence ends. Yet, as the passage from Newman shows, the colon and the semicolon are of great utility in marking the natural divisions of the thought within the limits of a single sentence. The semicolon, indeed, is often quite as effective as a conjunction.

[1] For the rules of punctuation, see Appendix.

In the following sentence from Stevenson the first two semicolons make conjunctions between the clauses unnecessary: —

I had all my first pains ; my throat was so sore I could scarce swallow ; I had a fit of strong shuddering, which clucked my teeth together ; and there came on me that dreadful sense of illness for which we have no name either in Scotch or English.

We should form the habit of punctuating our sentences as we write, in order to make them more easily intelligible. If we try to imagine how each sentence would sound if we were speaking, we shall do this almost unconsciously. We must bear in mind, however, that pauses in speech and marks of punctuation do not correspond exactly. Not every pause in speech demands a point in writing, and points are sometimes required (as in "No, sir") when there is no pause.

EXERCISES IN SENTENCES[1]

I

1. See in how many ways you can change Franklin's sentences on pages 12–13 without materially affecting the sense.

2. State in simple sentences all that Franklin has told in the first paragraph on page 12. See how many such sentences can be made from the paragraph.

3. Combine in any way that pleases you the sentences that you have made in Exercise 2, attempting at the same time to tell Franklin's story. Point out the advantages of this construction over that in Exercise 2.

4. Study the second paragraph of "The Battle of Bannockburn" (p. 22). Treat the paragraph as in Exercises 1, 2, and 3.

[1] The selections on pp. 391–400 may be utilized for exercises. For other exercises, see pp. 434–439. For phrases and clauses, see Appendix.

5. Study the first two paragraphs of the anecdote on page 38. Rewrite the paragraphs, using simple sentences. Then note what is lost in the rearrangement.

6. Select an interesting item of perhaps ten lines from a newspaper or magazine. Enumerate in simple sentences the facts which are stated or suggested in the paragraph. Read your list to the class, asking the other students to write the paragraph from your enumeration. Compare the paragraphs which they write, and see how many of these have really expressed the fact stated in the original.

II

Unite in a single sentence all the items in each of the exercises below.

1. The Provincial Congress was at Concord. The Continental Congress was at Philadelphia. The Provincial Congress sent a message to the Continental Congress. It asked the Continental Congress to make the army a continental army. It asked the Continental Congress to appoint a commander-in-chief.

2. A brave people lived a long time ago. These people were called Romans. They were warlike. They lived more than eighteen hundred years ago. They undertook to conquer the whole world. They undertook to subdue all countries. Their purpose was to make their own city of Rome the head of all nations. They wished to conquer all nations upon the face of the earth.

3. A song was sung by the choir. It was sung for the occasion. It was sung with perfect harmony. It was sung with unity. It was so sung that it seemed like some glorious instrument touched by a single hand.

4. The greater part of Frankfort is built in the old German style. Some houses are six stories high. Some houses are seven stories high. Every story projects over that below it. Those who live in the attics can nearly shake hands out of the windows.

5. Investigation of the earth's crust teaches us. It shows us that a chain stretches down from the first plants to those of to-day. It shows us that a chain stretches down from the first animals to those of to-day. This chain is mighty. Its links are living. It shows the order in which the plants succeeded each other. It shows the order in which the animals succeeded each other.

III

In the following exercise you will find fragments of sentences, — words, phrases, and clauses. Put them together in any way that you like, or in as many ways as you choose. In the class, compare your sentences with those made by the other students out of the same material, and observe the variety of thought and expression.

1. Four large frogs were sunning themselves. They were in front of me. They were near the shore. They were in the shallow water. They were among the lily pads.

2. Perseus looked up to the heaven above his head. It was still. He looked down. The sand was still beneath his feet. Above, there was nothing but the blinding sun. The blinding sun was in the blinding blue. Around him there was nothing but the sand. The sand was blinding.

3. I had sown sweet peas. I had two great patches of sweet peas. They made me happy all summer. I had sunflowers. I had hollyhocks, also. The sunflowers and hollyhocks were under the study windows. Madonna lilies grew between the hollyhocks and sunflowers. The colors of the hollyhocks turned out to be ugly. My first summer was decorated and beautified solely by sweet peas.

4. The coachman is seventy years old. His name is Peter. He was born on the place. He has driven its occupants for fifty years. We are very fond of him.

5. Centuries ago in a valley a little fern leaf grew the fern was green and slender its veins were delicate it waved in the wind and bent low tall rushes grew around it moss and grass grew around it sunbeams came fanned the dew fell on it by night no man ever saw it no foot of man ever came that way then earth was young then earth was keeping holiday.

IV

In the following passage observe how one long sentence is built up on the basis of a simple statement by means of modifiers. See how many simple sentences you can make out of the passage.

The Saracen came on at the speedy gallop of an Arab horseman, managing his steed more by his limbs and the inflection of

his body than by any use of the reins, which hung loose in his left hand; so that he was enabled to wield the light, round buckler of the skin of the rhinoceros, ornamented with silver loops, which he wore on his arm, swinging it as if he meant to oppose its slender circle to the formidable thrust of the Western lance. — SCOTT.

V

1. Find twenty sentences in some book in which variation from the simplest order of words indicates emphasis (see pp. 326–329). Make similar sentences of your own.

2. Change the order of clauses in some complex sentence so as to vary the emphasis (see p. 329).[1]

3. Bring to the class twelve examples of different kinds of subordinate clauses. Show how the statements in the subordinate clauses are related to those in the main clauses; and explain the force of the subordinating connective in each sentence.

4. Rewrite the sentences, indicating the relations between the clauses without the use of subordinating connectives.

5. Make as complete a list as you can of the different ways in which a clause may be subordinated, with an example in each case.

6. Write a series of statements on (1) swimming, (2) Washington, (3) your town, (4) automobiles, (5) athletics.

Combine each series into a set of (1) compound sentences of various forms, and (2) complex sentences of various forms. Study the difference in emphasis, coherence, and general effectiveness.

7. Rewrite the sentences on your town (Exercise 6) into a series consisting chiefly of complex sentences, in which the main clauses shall contain the statements which concern the town. Write a second series in which the main clauses shall contain chiefly the statements that concern the inhabitants.

Compare the effect of the two sets of sentences.

[1] For exercises in Antithesis (pp. 330–332), Balance (pp. 332–334), Climax (pp. 334–336), Parallel Structure (336–337), Rhetorical Questions (pp. 338–339), and Figures of Speech (pp. 370–382), the examples given in the places referred to will serve as material. The student should find similar specimens in his reading.

CHAPTER III

WORDS

CHOICE OF WORDS

When all is said and done, it is the **choice and use of words** that determines whether or not we succeed in expressing our thoughts and feelings clearly and adequately. Good paragraphing makes our writing easy to follow, and variety of sentences is indispensable when we get beyond the very simplest ideas; but, unless we choose our words skilfully and use them accurately, we cannot explain any subject, no matter how well we understand it, nor can we convey to our readers our impressions about what interests us, however vivid they may be in our own minds. For composition, in the last analysis, is a matter of words.

In itself, however, a word is merely a conventional group of sounds, and in writing it is symbolized by a conventional group of peculiarly shaped marks. There is no essential connection, in the nature of things, between the word and the object which it signifies; *horse* is no better name for the animal in question than the Latin *equus*, the French *cheval*, the German *Pferd*, or the Spanish *caballo*. It is only the general agreement of those who speak and write the language that gives to the particular combination of sounds its definite meaning, or to the particular combination of marks its power to represent the sounds. If, therefore, we are to use words in such a way as will

convey to other people our own thoughts and feelings, we must conform to that general **usage** which settles the force and meaning of every word in the language.

THE STANDARD OF USAGE

Usage governs language. There is no other standard. By **usage,** however, is meant the **practice of the best writers and speakers,** not merely the habits of the community in which we chance to live.

This requirement of **conformity to good usage** is not an arbitrary law, imposed upon us by some power from without. We speak and write in order to be understood; and it is only common sense to employ such words as are in general use, and to employ them in the meanings that are habitually assigned to them by educated persons. If we neglect this principle, we may defeat our purpose in writing; for only by following it can we make sure that the reader will gather from our words the thoughts that we intend them to convey.

Moreover, disregard of good usage will expose us to the suspicion of illiteracy. **To speak and write correctly** is the most generally recognized test of education. No matter how cultivated a man is, if he expresses himself in a way that most people regard as slovenly and inaccurate, he will be set down as deficient in elementary knowledge; and this judgment will be passed upon him not only by all educated people, but by others as well. As in conduct, so in language, many persons who are careless themselves, are quick to detect and condemn the slips of their friends and associates.

Finally, English is what is called a **literary language,** — that is, it has been used for centuries in the expression of

thought by a long line of writers of genius and culture. This great body of literature, together with the language in which it is expressed, is our inheritance, and, like every inheritance, it imposes a duty as well as confers a privilege. It is not merely *our* language that we speak; it is the language of Shakspere and Milton and Burke and Webster. We may use it freely, for it is our own; but we should not use it unworthily.

MODERN USAGE

Language is constantly changing. Yet it changes so gradually that it may be regarded as fixed for the lifetime of any one writer. The usage to which we must conform, therefore, is that of **our own time.** We cannot justify a violation of **modern usage** by quoting Shakspere, any more than Shakspere, if he had infringed on the usage of his day, could have defended himself by quoting Chaucer. Plainly, therefore, our standard of expression must be the practice of **good writers and speakers of the present day.**

One further caution is necessary. No writer, however eminent, is free from faults. "Even Homer," says the proverb, "is now and then caught napping." Besides, a great author may take liberties with his mother tongue which we cannot venture to imitate. The mere fact that a word or a meaning occurs in one or two good writers is not enough to justify us in adopting it. The usage which we follow should be **general,** not peculiar.

For convenience, we may sum up our practical standard of linguistic correctness in a single sentence: **Good use is the general practice of reputable writers of the present day.**

There are, of course, varieties of usage, even among good authors, so that it is not always possible to pronounce

one of two words or meanings correct and the other incorrect. In some cases, too, there is room for a difference of opinion as to the admissibility of a particular expression. But in a language like English, which has been written and studied for so many centuries, all the main facts and principles are settled. Disputes about this or that detail do not affect the general uniformity of the standard.[1]

In cases of doubt, the wise course for the young writer is plain: he will naturally prefer, in language, as in manners or morals, to be on the safe side. If, as he gains experience, he discovers that he has imposed unreasonable restrictions on his liberty of choice, he can easily revise his standards in the direction of greater freedom. It is harder to reform bad habits than to improve good ones.

The facts of good usage are to be learned only from an extensive and intimate acquaintance with literature. Grammars, dictionaries, and rhetorics do not establish the standard; they are authoritative in so far only as they correctly record the results of a study of the best writers. Since, however, the English language has been critically investigated for many years, there are comparatively few questions of usage as to which there is serious doubt. Still, dubious points exist, and, in such cases, the oral testimony of a man of learning may be of more value, in a matter of detail to which he has given special attention, than the printed statement of many grammars and rhetorics. The student must of course depend for the most part on his text-books and on works of reference; but he should remember that a person who is not an authority does not become so by printing his opinions in a book.

[1] Compare what is said of grammatical principles in "The Mother Tongue," Book II, p. xvi.

WORDS NOT IN GOOD USE

Every language contains a large stock of words that are not in good prose use.[1] Among these may be mentioned **archaisms** (or obsolete words), **pompous** (or big) **words** which have never become current, **foreign words** not yet naturalized, **technical terms** appropriate only in special treatises, **colloquialisms** improper in serious writing, **provincialisms** or dialect words, and **slang**.

Archaisms are common in poetry, and the same is true of many other words that would be pompous or affected in prose. **Colloquialisms** are proper enough in ordinary conversation (see p. 352) and **technical words** in technical writing (see p. 358). **Foreign words, provincialisms,** and **slang** require particular discussion.

POETICAL LANGUAGE

The **language of poetry** differs greatly from that of prose. In particular, it makes use of **archaic** (that is, old) forms, words, and phrases, and it abounds in unusual terms and in **figures of speech.** It is also freer than prose in changing the usual order of words, whether for emphasis or for some special poetic effect.

The following passage from Tennyson's "Gareth and Lynette" illustrates the archaism of poetical style: —

> For so the queen believed that when her son
> Beheld his only way to glory lead
> Low down through villain kitchen-vassalage,
> Her own true Gareth was too princely-proud
> To pass thereby; so should he rest with her,
> Closed in her castle from the sound of arms.

[1] That is, in good use as defined on p. 347.

Silent awhile was Gareth, then replied:
"The thrall in person may be free in soul,
And I shall see the jousts. Thy son am I,
And since thou art my mother, must obey.
I therefore yield me freely to thy will;
For hence will I, disguised, and hire myself
To serve with scullions and with kitchen-knaves;
Nor tell my name to any — no, not the king."

In this passage of simple narrative verse, *villain* is used in the sense of "low" or "lowborn," and *knave* in the sense of "servant." *Thrall* is an old word for "serf."

In the following passages from the same poem Tennyson illustrates the free use which poetry makes of figurative language: —

1. Then to the shore of one of those long loops
Wherethrough the serpent river coil'd, they came.
Rough-thicketed were the banks and steep; the stream
Full, narrow; this a bridge of single arc
Took at a leap; and on the further side
Arose a silk pavilion, gay with gold
In streaks and rays, and all Lent-lily in hue,
Save that the dome was purple, and above,
Crimson, a slender banneret fluttering.

2. And all the three were silent seeing, pitch'd
Beside the Castle Perilous on flat field,
A huge pavilion like a mountain peak
Sunder the glooming crimson on the marge,
Black, with black banner, and a long black horn
Beside it hanging.

A young writer should be careful not to imitate the peculiarities of poetry in his prose compositions. The style should be appropriate to the matter and the occasion. Excessively florid or "flowery" diction is a common fault of unpractised but ambitious authors.

FOREIGN WORDS

English has borrowed extensively from foreign languages, often with no change in the word.[1]

Thus, for example, we have from the Latin, *cancer, circus, inertia, stupor, squalor, rebus, innuendo, errata, vim, gladiolus, simile, stamen, folio, administrator;* from the Greek, *acme, atlas, pathos, chaos, aster, crisis, lexicon, skeleton, phlox;* from the French, *belle, chandelier, dame, police, figure, nature, prestige, grace, jargon, glacier, rôle, mauve;* from the Italian, *canto, dilettante, lava, macaroni, villa, piano, loggia, piazza, fiasco;* from the Spanish, *mosquito, negro, merino, cañon, siesta;* from the German, *gneiss, landau, meerschaum, zinc.*

All these words, and countless others, though of foreign origin, have become so naturalized that they are as good English as if they had been members of our linguistic community ever since the days of King Alfred. Hospitality to foreign words is one of the fixed habits of our language, and new terms are constantly applying for admission.

Yet it is manifestly unwise to interlard our English writing with words and phrases that are still felt as foreign. For, in the first place, such terms may be unintelligible to our readers, and, in the second place, their extensive use is an affectation, like putting on airs in company.

When we are tempted to employ a French or a Latin word or phrase that has not yet become an accepted part of the English vocabulary, we should ask ourselves if there is not some English expression (native or naturalized) that will answer. Commonly, we shall find such an expression if we look for it; but, if our language furnishes no satisfactory equivalent, we may be forced to use the foreign term.

A foreign word which has not yet been admitted into the English vocabulary is sometimes called a **barbarism.**

[1] Except sometimes in pronunciation.

The term is convenient, but not very appropriate. It is of little utility to set up the dogma that "barbarisms are bad English." Their continual use is to be avoided, not because they are bad English, but because they savor of affectation and may not be generally understood.

COLLOQUIAL LANGUAGE AND SLANG

The language that we **write** will always differ somewhat from the language that we **speak.** **Colloquial English** (that is, the language of ordinary conversation) admits many words, phrases, forms, and constructions which would be out of place in serious composition.[1]

The distinction is important, though frequently overlooked in estimating the correctness of a word or phrase. Written language is expected to be more careful and exact than spoken language. The requirement is only reasonable. When we talk, the expression of our thoughts is aided by gesture, by stress or emphasis of the voice, and by oral inflections or modulations;[2] in writing, we have none of these at our command. Moreover, when we converse with anybody, he forms his opinion of us not only from what we say, but also from our appearance, our manners, and the quality of our voices. He is therefore less likely than a reader to misjudge us or to misinterpret our words. Hence, though conversational language should not be slangy or slipshod, it may properly enough take liberties that written composition must avoid.

Slang, from its very nature, can never be in good use. Whenever a slang term becomes reputable, it ceases to be

[1] Compare "The Mother Tongue," Book II, p. xxii.

[2] For some of the means which writers use to reproduce these effects, see pp. 326–329.

slang. *Mob, banter, hoax, bore* (in the sense of *to weary*), *gerrymander* were once slang terms, but have worked their way first into the colloquial vocabulary and then into the language of books. Most slang, however, has no such good fortune.

The reasons for **avoiding slang** are plain enough. In the first place, slang changes with great rapidity, both in its words and in the meanings they bear. It is too unstable and evanescent to serve the purposes of recording one's thoughts.

Secondly, the habitual use of a slang word starves out a number of nicely discriminated synonyms. If we call everything that we like *great* or *stunning*, — from a good dinner to a fine poem, — we ignore a multitude of far more expressive adjectives which would indicate with precision our thought or feeling in a great variety of circumstances. Slang words are seldom specific; they are the lazy man's substitute for the mental exertion involved in thinking up the terms that really express his thought. Hence their use tends to weaken our power of discrimination and to enervate our minds.

Finally, almost all slang is vulgar, — either in its origin or in its associations. Its habitual use is taken as a sign of low breeding or of affected rowdiness. This is in itself a sufficient reason for avoiding it.

Provincialisms and **dialect words** should not be confused with slang. They are not the idle and fantastic coinages of the moment, but, in most cases, old words or meanings that have either gone out of use, except in a limited district, or have never come into general use. They differ greatly in respectability, some of them being well established in colloquial speech while others are seldom heard from educated people. The reason for avoiding them is that they are not universally intelligible.

Examples of provincial or dialect words are the following: — *calaboose, ruination, pernickety, sunup; guess, expect, calculate, reckon,* and *allow* in the sense of *think* or *suppose; right smart; clever* for *good-natured;* "*tell* him good-bye" for "*bid* him good-bye"; *raised* for *reared* (of persons); *red up* for *clear up; 'tarnal* for *very great; ridiculous* for *abominable* or *outrageous; all over* for *everywhere; some place* for *somewhere;* "I am *through*" for "I have *finished*"; *do be* for *be; tuckered* for *tired out;* "*some* pretty" for "*somewhat* pretty"; *pie plant* for *rhubarb; spider* for *frying pan.*[1]

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF CHOICE

Within the limits of good usage, and in every case controlled by it, there are four great principles which should guide us in the choice of words, — **correctness, precision, appropriateness,** and **expressiveness.**

Correctness is the most elementary of all requirements. The meanings of words are settled by **usage.** If we use a word incorrectly, — that is, in a sense which does not customarily belong to it, — our readers will miss our thought, or, at best, they must arrive at it by inference or guesswork.

In the second place, we must fit our words as exactly and **precisely** as possible to the thoughts which we wish to express. We may write correctly enough and still, by neglecting **precision,** so blur or obscure our meaning by vague or ambiguous language as to leave the reader with a very indistinct impression of the thought that we desire to convey.

In the third place, our words must be **appropriate to the subject and the occasion.** Otherwise, no matter how correct they are, or how precisely we fit them to our meaning, they will fail to produce the effect that we intend.

[1] For the use of dialect in stories, see p. 60.

Finally, our words must be **expressive.** They may be correctly used, they may set forth our meaning precisely, they may be appropriate to the occasion; and yet, after all, they may be so dull and lifeless as to leave the reader uninterested and unmoved. If words are really to serve our purpose, they must express the color and vividness of our feelings about the subject that we are treating.

We shall study these four principles — **correctness, precision, appropriateness,** and **expressiveness** — in the pages that follow. Meantime, a few concrete examples will make their bearing evident.

1. Correctness. — A man's *vocation* is his "calling," his "occupation"; his *avocation*, on the contrary, is "that which calls him *away* from his regular business," as music in the case of a lawyer, or baseball in the case of a college student. It is correct, then, to say: "The business of his life is politics; he makes literature an *avocation*." If, now, we use *avocation* for *vocation*, we violate the principle of correctness, and run the risk of being understood in a sense that is directly opposite to what we intend to say.[1]

2. Precision. — Suppose we wish to set forth the thought "Shakspere is a great *poet*," and, through carelessness, say merely "Shakspere is a great *writer*." We have violated no principle of correctness; what we say is good English and in every way unassailable in itself. Yet it does not express with **precision** the idea that was in our mind.

3. Appropriateness. — Suppose we wished to tell a child what he would like in "Alice in Wonderland." We should not think of remarking that he would find it "an entertaining volume" or "replete with humor." So, on the other hand, if we were writing an address on "Modern Humorists," to be delivered before a literary society, we should not say that "Alice in Wonderland" is

[1] The use of *avocation* for *vocation* is gaining ground, but good writers commonly avoid it. In the plural, however, *avocations* has established itself in the sense of "regular and habitual pursuits."

"very funny." All the words in question are correctly and precisely used; yet they would, in each case, be inappropriate to the occasion and the audience, and hence they would distort the effect that we intended to produce.

4. **Expressiveness.** — We must consider not only whether a word is adapted to convey our precise meaning to a definite audience on a particular occasion, but also whether it expresses our feelings about the subject. Compare "I wished to find my father" with "I could not rest till I found him." The former sentence is good English in every respect, but it is too cool and colorless to suggest the eager excitement of an anxious search.

In studying the **four great principles of choice,** we observe that only the first involves the question of **right** and **wrong.** The others deal with questions of discrimination between better and worse, — that is, with the closer **adaptation of words to the thoughts and feelings** which we undertake to express. Further, it is only in dealing with the first principle (**correctness**) that we can keep our attention entirely on the single word. A vague noun may be made precise by means of an adjective; the tone of the whole composition determines the appropriateness of each word that it contains; the expressiveness of a phrase is often different from the sum of the expressiveness of the single words that compose it. Clearly, then, **correctness** stands on a different footing from the other three principles of choice.

CORRECTNESS

As soon as we begin to study the principle of **correctness in the use of words,** we notice that there is one class of words which we are in little danger of misemploying. Every one knows what such terms as *bread, chair, awkward, quick, bark, jump, telephone* mean, and can

use them accurately. These **specific terms,** if only we are familiar with the subject they concern, need no definition.

Contrasted with specific words are such **general terms** as *science, intellect, revolution, literature, temperance, affectation, propriety.* These differ from the specific words in being far less definitely limited in their application. Indeed, the varieties of meaning which each of them covers are so great that every speaker may almost be said to use them in a somewhat different sense.

Compare, for example, the specific term *book* with the general term *literature.* "He held a *book* in his hand" calls up a clear picture in the mind. There is no danger of our misunderstanding the word or misusing it. *Literature,* on the contrary, is an elastic term. Its meaning varies with the person and the circumstances. To one it suggests only such works as have an established reputation for artistic form; by another it is stretched to cover the transient harvest of the bookstalls; a third rejects the trashy novel but admits a well-written work of science; a fourth regards science and literature as mutually exclusive. Scott's "Ivanhoe," Bacon's "Essays," Stanley's "In Darkest Africa," Darwin's "Voyage of the Beagle," Winsor's "History of America," Whately's "Logic," Bryce's "American Commonwealth," and Dr. Doyle's "Hound of the Baskervilles" are all *books,* — nobody can dispute that; but how many of them belong to *literature?* To this question a hundred different persons might give a hundred different answers.

Consider how men's opinions differ as to the *honesty* of a particular transaction, the *propriety* of this or that line of conduct, the *wit* or *wisdom* of some remark that they hear or read. Half our lives is spent in balancing and discussing the applicability of such general terms to specific acts or objects.

Obviously, then, there is ample opportunity for error in the use of general words, since it is so difficult to fix the bounds of their correct use. Such error may consist either in stretching their sense beyond what good

usage has prescribed, or in limiting it too rigidly in accordance with some prejudice or pedantic whim.

Attention, clear thinking, and knowledge of good literature, are requisite if we are to avoid the pitfalls that beset the use of general terms. Such terms are necessary in the expression of thought. **Inaccuracy in their employment, however, is fatal to perspicuity, and debilitating to the mind.**

TECHNICAL TERMS

Every special subject or department of study — as law, medicine, carpentry, engineering, or rhetoric — has its own vocabulary of **technical terms.** Within the limits of the subject in question, every such term has a rigidly defined sense, which cannot be disregarded without a gross violation of **correctness.** Many of these terms, however, get into everyday use; they are then sure to lose some of their technical accuracy. Sometimes this vaguer or less scientific use becomes established in the language; sometimes it does not. Here, as everywhere else, there is no standard but good usage.

Thus *federal*, in constitutional law, distinguishes the powers and attributes of a common government that is established by a union or *federation* of states. In common parlance, however, it may signify "pertaining to the United States." Both meanings are **correct,** for both are sanctioned by **good usage**; we should be careful not to confuse the two or to employ one of them in a context that suggests or demands the other.

Again, *intellectual*, in psychology, distinguishes the thinking or reasoning faculties of the mind from the senses, emotions, and instincts. In ordinary language, however, it is sometimes carelessly used as a synonym for *learned*. This looser sense has some authority, but, if not positively incorrect, is generally avoided by discriminating writers.

Other examples of technical words and phrases that have become more or less popular and require especial care for their accurate use are *evolution, survival of the fittest, original sin, total depravity, unearned increment, metaphysical, psychology, critical, demur, estop, eliminate, hypothecate, trust* (in the commercial sense), *currency, philology, democratic, aristocracy, handicap, microbe, verdict, plead, melody, sociology, vivisection, clarify, fallacy, sophistry, syllogism, logical, organic, affiliate, degenerate, dynamic, entail.*

To use such words correctly in their wider application, we must know something of their original and technical meaning. Otherwise we may employ them so erroneously or incongruously as to obscure our thought instead of illuminating it. In law, a man is said to be *estopped* from a declaration or act when some former act or statement *of his own* is inconsistent with it. Therefore to say, "The mayor estopped the aldermen from acting," is incorrect and absurd. On the other hand, it would be proper to say that "the action of the aldermen last February estops them from proceeding with their present plan."

NOTE. — The distinction between *specific* and *general* words should not be pushed too far. A word like *man* is specific as compared with *animal*, but general as compared with a proper noun like *Washington*. The ordinary rhetorical sense of *specific* and *general* is far less exact than the logical or philosophical use. In rhetoric, *specific* is almost synonymous with *concrete*, and *general* or *collective* often nearly coterminous with *abstract*. In like manner, we must not insist too strictly on the technical meanings of words drawn from the sciences. Such a word, as we have seen, often establishes itself in good usage in a new or more extended signification.

PRECISION

The principle of **precision** (p. 355) guides us in fitting our words definitely and exactly to the thought that we wish to express. Here we are no longer dealing with questions of right and wrong in language, but rather

with matters of expediency. We must ask ourselves not merely, "Is the word good English?" but "Does it precisely express the thought that I have in mind?"

Regard for precision often requires the use of a specific rather than a general word. If we say *animal* when we mean *dog*, or *tree* when we mean *elm*, or use *picture* for *portrait*, *savage* for *Indian*, *apple* for *greening*, *fish* for *trout*, *disagreeable* for *ill-tempered*, *building* for *statehouse*, we are violating the principle of precision.

On the other hand, if our thought is general, — as of course it often must be, — a general word expresses our meaning more precisely than a specific word. So, if we mean *animal*, or *tree*, or *picture*, or *savage*, or *apple*, rather than *dog*, or *elm*, or *portrait*, or *Indian*, or *greening*, — that is, if we really wish to express a general rather than a specific idea, — precision requires that we should use the general word. Similarly, *legislature* is less specific than *the Senate and the House of Representatives* or *the Lords and Commons*. But if we say, "A legislature is ill-adapted to executive functions," *legislature* expresses our meaning with entire precision. Indeed, there are many words and phrases whose virtue consists in their large inclusiveness. *Existence*, *supernatural*, *the nature of things*, *knowledge of the universe*, *the eternal verities* are the precise expressions of certain comprehensive ideas which no specific terms can denote.

For most of us, however, there is more danger of using a general term when a specific word would serve the purpose better, than of using a specific for a general word. The word *move* will fill the grammatical place of *hop*, *run*, *walk*, *slide*, *jolt*, *sprawl*, and a host of other verbs. If our thought is sluggish or sleepy, it is easier to use the general word *move* than to call up the specific word

which adds to the general idea the precise idea of the particular kind of motion meant.

One of the commonest of rhetorical faults is the expression (or half-expression) of specific ideas in general terms. A teacher, therefore, is constantly obliged to change a general word to a specific in correcting students' essays, and must emphasize incessantly the advantages of specific language. Hence beginners sometimes get the odd notion that specific words are *in themselves* better than general words, and are therefore always to be preferred. This misapprehension confuses them extremely, since every page that they read and every conversation that they hear illustrates its falsity. The **precise word** or phrase is the word or phrase which expresses the **exact idea precisely**; it will be specific or general according as the idea itself is specific or general.

AIDS TO PRECISION

It is a great help to the exact understanding and the precise use of words to know their **derivation.** Many of our general words come from the Latin, and in such cases the Latin meaning is often more concrete or more picturesque than the English. Almost all English and American writers of distinction have had some acquaintance with Latin, and have used these borrowed terms with a keen sense of their original meaning. Such a feeling for derivation is a distinct aid to precision.

Determine means literally "to mark off the boundaries" (compare *terminus*); *prospect*, "a look ahead"; *satisfaction*, "doing enough"; *doctrine*, "teaching"; *eradicate*, "to root out"; *deter*, "to frighten away"; *apprehend*, "to catch hold of"; *magnanimous*, "great-souled"; *complicated*, "folded together"; *introduce*, "to lead in"; *diffuse*, "poured apart," "scattered."

It should be remembered, however, that most of these borrowed words have changed their signification more or less in English. We must therefore take care not to make our style fantastic or unintelligible by adhering too closely to the Latin meaning.

A number of words that illustrate the importance of etymological study are here noted as examples: — *anticipate, surreptitious, convince, dilapidated, secure, ponder, fiscal, redound, equivocation, edify, solution, sinecure, discuss, collateral, circumstance, depend, consent, oblivion, martial, insult, reluctant, transfix, pretext, abstract, insinuate, exposition, explanation, repulsion, redeem, subtraction, torture, tradition, conclusion, innuendo, exaggeration, aggravation, obvious, superannuated, negative, disturbance, implication, supercilious, encourage* (compare *dishearten*), *real, science, reveal* (compare *revelation*), *jeopardy, adventure, agreeable, engagement, feature.* For a study of the English vocabulary, with special reference to development of meanings, see "Words and their Ways in English Speech" by J. B. Greenough and G. L. Kittredge.

Precision is not altogether a matter of single words. If a word is too general to express our exact meaning, we may often make it precise by means of a **modifier.**

Thus, "The *president* was elected for a second term" may apply to any one of several presidents of the United States, not to speak of presidents of societies and corporations. "The president *of the United States*" is more precise, and "the *first* president of the United States" can refer to Washington alone. In this case we are dealing with adjective modifiers; but the same principle holds of adverbs, adverbial phrases, and adverbial clauses.[1]

Precision requires not only an exact and thorough knowledge of the subject on which we write, but the command of an extensive vocabulary and the power to discriminate nicely between the meanings of words. As we advance in experience and education, we learn to

[1] Compare "The Mother Tongue," Book II, pp. 37–38.

distinguish more and more sharply among objects and ideas, and consequently we feel an ever-increasing need for precision in expressing our thoughts. If our ideas are blurred and muddy, we can get along without it; if they are clear and distinctly outlined, our language must be precise if it is to represent them accurately.

APPROPRIATENESS

The third great principle in choosing words is **appropriateness.** Even if our words are used correctly and express our meaning with precision, they will fail of their purpose unless they are **appropriate to the subject, to the occasion, and to the reader's understanding.** If we talk over the heads of our hearers, they will not listen. If we resort to an affected simplicity, they will feel offended or contemptuous. If our language is slangy, or slipshod, or over-colloquial, they will doubt our sincerity or our appreciation of the subject. We must put ourselves in the place of our readers, for this is the only sure guide to appropriateness.

Appropriateness is what used to be called **propriety.** Thus Dryden, speaking of poetry, remarks, in a famous passage: "Propriety of thought is that fancy which arises naturally from the subject, or which the poet adapts to it. Propriety of words is the clothing of these thoughts with such expressions as are naturally proper to them."

In writing about simple and familiar things we should use simple words. We should not, as Goldsmith said of Dr. Johnson, "make little fishes talk like whales." Novelists often ridicule the habit of using pompous or "big" words. Thus George Eliot, in "Middlemarch," makes

Mr. Turnbull, the auctioneer, say, "O yes, anybody may ask. Anybody may interrogate. Any one may give their remarks an interrogative turn." Mr. Micawber in "David Copperfield" habitually speaks in the following style: "My dear Copperfield, this is indeed a meeting which is calculated to impress the mind with a sense of the instability and uncertainty of all human — in short, it is a most extraordinary meeting."

The familiar words in English are not all short, however. *Pendulum, contradict, arsenic, elastic, monotonous, photographer, consequence, obstinate,* and countless others came into the language as "learned words" from Latin and Greek, but are now in everyday use. The progress of science and the spread of education are continually familiarizing us with such terms and thus enlarging the vocabulary of ordinary life.

Simple language is well suited to most expositions, and to arguments addressed to the reason alone. In such cases, any approach to a florid style seems like affectation and may even suggest insincerity.

The use of simple words, however, is not limited to the familiar style. Observe the impressiveness of the following passages, — the first from "Macbeth," the second from the Book of Job: —

> To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow
> Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
> To the last syllable of recorded time;
> And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
> The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
> Life 's but a walking shadow, a poor player,
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
> And then is heard no more; it is a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing.

In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men, fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up. It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image was before mine eyes; there was silence, and I heard a voice, saying: "Shall mortal man be more just than God? Shall a man be more pure than his maker?"

These two passages contain hardly a word that is not familiar to everybody, and the simplicity of the language enhances their power. We should not underestimate the expressive value of common words merely because they serve the ordinary purposes of life.

Simplicity of style, however, is not always appropriate to the occasion. Read the following extract from Webster's "First Oration on Bunker Hill Monument": —

This uncounted multitude before me and around me proves the feeling which the occasion has excited. These thousands of human faces, glowing with sympathy and joy, and from the impulses of a common gratitude turned reverently to heaven in this spacious temple of the firmament, proclaim that the day, the place, and the purpose of our assembling have made a deep impression on our hearts.

If, indeed, there be anything in local association fit to affect the mind of man, we need not strive to repress the emotions which agitate us here. We are among the sepulchres of our fathers. We are on ground distinguished by their valor, their constancy, and the shedding of their blood. We are here, not to fix an uncertain date in our annals, nor to draw into notice an obscure and unknown spot. If our humble purpose had never been conceived, if we ourselves had never been born, the 17th of June, 1775, would have been a day on which all subsequent history would have poured its light, and the eminence where we stand a point of attraction to the eyes of successive generations. But we are Americans. We live in what may be called the early age of this great continent; and we know that our posterity, through all time, are here to enjoy and suffer the allotments of

humanity. We see before us a probable train of great events; we know that our own fortunes have been happily cast; and it is natural, therefore, that we should be moved by the contemplation of occurrences which have guided our destiny before many of us were born, and settled the condition in which we shall pass that portion of our existence which God allows to men on earth.

Here the dignity of a great celebration called for a larger proportion of long and sonorous words than would have been appropriate on an ordinary occasion. Such an opening sentence as, "There are a great many of us here to-day, all full of enthusiasm, all eager to show how much we think of the day and the place," would have been absurdly out of keeping. Full-sounding words and phrases like *multitude, reverently, temple of the firmament, local association* fitted the solemnity of the moment. Familiar terms were inappropriate; what was needed was an elevated and stately vocabulary.

The same principle of appropriateness which Webster followed in his oration should guide us in our choice of words. In a letter to an older person, one naturally uses a less familiar style than in a letter to a friend of one's own age; and a speech at graduation calls for a still more dignified vocabulary. In short, we should always consider the occasion and choose our words in accordance with its demands.

SPECIAL QUESTIONS OF APPROPRIATENESS

Every art, science, and craft has its special vocabulary of **technical terms** which are unintelligible to most outsiders (see p. 349). The same is true of many games and sports. In discussing football with a company of boys, you can safely use such terms as *guard, quarter-back,* and *signal* in their special senses without explanation.

Chamfer, dowels, and *countersink* are immediately clear to a carpenter; *sequelae, septicaemia,* and *prophylaxis* to a physician; *trover, tort,* and *contributory negligence* to a lawyer; *cold-swaged, gudgeon,* and *bevel gear* to a mechanic, and so on. Technical terms are appropriate in a technical treatise addressed to a body of specialists, but they should be sparingly used in ordinary writings, and, when they are necessary, should be carefully defined.

Many such terms, however, have become familiar parts of the ordinary vocabulary, and these may of course be used freely without definition or apology.

Such are, — *mortgage, attorney, injunction, oxygen, dovetail, mortise, insulate, dynamo, inoculate, cauterize, microbe.*

Archaic words and forms are freely used in poetry (see p. 349). In prose, however, they are seldom appropriate except in conversational passages that aim to produce an effect of antiquity. On the same principle, **colloquialisms, dialect words, slang,** and **bad grammar** may often be found in dialogue. In all such cases, the writer's purpose is to make his characters seem real and to throw light on their station or circumstances (see p. 60). The device is a good one; but, when overworked, or when a laborious effort is made to reproduce the exact sound, it becomes exceedingly tiresome.

EXPRESSIVENESS

The fourth principle in the choice of words is **expressiveness.** It is not enough that our language should be correct, precise, and appropriate to the subject and the occasion. It may fulfil all these requirements and still fail to move or interest the reader because our words are cold and unexpressive.

The **expressiveness** of a word or phrase depends not merely on what it actually **denotes**, but also on its associations and on what it **suggests**, — that is, on the ideas and feelings which it calls up in our minds over and above its precise meaning.

Thus, *fist* means simply "the hand with the fingers doubled up against the palm," but it suggests a pugilistic encounter; *scalpel* suggests all that we know or have heard of surgical operations; *poniard* suggests bravos and midnight assassinations; *anvil* suggests some blacksmith's shop with which we are familiar.

These associations of words vary infinitely. Sometimes they are merely personal, going back to a particular incident or experience.[1] Sometimes, on the contrary, they are common to all speakers, and thus have become, to all intents and purposes, a part of the meaning which the words convey. *Home*, for example, is distinguished from *house* or *residence* by the associations of comfort and affection that belong to it. A moment's thought will enable one to recall many other words which suggest, in like manner, much more than they actually denote.

This suggestive power of words and phrases must always be borne in mind in writing, as well as their definite sense. Otherwise we shall run the risk not only of missing their full expressiveness, but also of combining them incongruously.

Expressiveness often depends not merely on a skilful choice of single words, but also on their felicitous combination in phrases and sentences. Observe the depth and

[1] Every one can think of words for which he feels a whimsical aversion, not because they are unpleasant in sound or meaning, but simply because they are associated in his mind with a disagreeable experience or an uncongenial person.

intensity of feeling expressed by the italicized phrases in the following passage from Thackeray: —

> Remember your own young days at school, my friend, — the *tingling cheeks, burning ears, bursting heart,* and *passion of desperate tears,* with which you looked up, after having performed some blunder, whilst the Doctor held you up to public scorn before the class, and cracked his great clumsy jokes upon you — helpless and a prisoner!

Here, as often, the expressive force of the words resides in their combined power to suggest definite physical sensations which form part of the ordinary experience of every reader (see pp. 102–105).[1]

GENERAL AND SPECIFIC WORDS

Words differ greatly in expressiveness. Abstract terms like *quality, essence, elevation* are applicable to so many particular cases that they carry no individual suggestions. A preponderance of such words makes one's writing dull and neutral-tinted. More specific words, on the other hand, — like *willow, orange, spring, irritable, panther,* — are limited in their application. Consequently, they are surrounded by definite associations,[2] and thus have the power to suggest or connote much that they do not actually *say*. Such words, therefore, are more **vivid** and **expressive** than general terms.[3]

Expressiveness, then, is enhanced by the use of specific words, and, in particular, by those which suggest action or feeling. The more specific a word is, the more vivid and expressive it is likely to be.[4]

[1] See the examples of simile and metaphor (pp. 373–376).

[2] See especially pp. 103–104.

[3] On specific and general words, see also pp. 360–361.

[4] See the discussion of the value of sensations in descriptions (p. 102).

"A *dog* ran out and barked at me," conveys a less vivid impression than "A *terrier* ran out and barked at me." The word *terrier* instantly calls up in the reader's mind the image of a small dog, with quick, restless movements, and a sharp, quick bark. Probably, also, he will think of a particular terrier with which he is acquainted. *Dog*, however, calls up a much vaguer image, for the animal may be anything from a poodle to a bloodhound. In such cases, the specific word *terrier* includes the meaning of the general term and a good deal besides.

De Foe writes of Robinson Crusoe's first attempts to make earthenware, that they produced "odd, misshapen, ugly things."[1] This is far more vivid than if he had written that the pottery was "irregular in shape," — a phrase which would have expressed the bare fact well enough. Ik Marvel's description of Spring in "Dream Life" owes its interest and effectiveness to its vivid specific words, as in the sentence: "The old elms throw down their dingy flowers, and color their spray with green; and the brooks where you throw your worm or the minnow, float down whole fleets of the crimson blossoms of the maple."

FIGURES OF SPEECH

Expressiveness is greatly assisted by the appropriate use of **figurative language.**

Our ordinary talk is full of figures of speech. We use them unconsciously, obeying the natural tendency to compare one thing with another that resembles it, whether in fact or in our imagination.

When a student speaks of "*hammering away* at his algebra," or says that he has "just *squeezed through*" an examination in Latin, or that a date in history has "*slipped* his mind," he is using a **figure of speech.** The expressions noted are manifestly more vivid than if he were to say that he is "*studying hard* at his algebra," or that he has "*barely passed* the examination," or

[1] The vague word *things* is used with excellent judgment, for the shape of the vessels was so uncertain that Crusoe did not know what to call them.

"*forgotten* the date." The general sense is the same in either case, but the language in the former instance suggests a livelier and more picturesque conception of the facts, and therefore attracts and holds the hearer's attention more certainly.

Goldsmith, in one of his essays, calls attention to the familiarity of "tropes," or figurative uses of words: —

Tropes are found in the most ordinary forms of conversation. Thus, in every language the heart burns; the courage is roused; the eyes sparkle; the spirits are cast down; passion inflames, pride swells, and pity sinks the soul. Nature everywhere speaks in those stray images, which, from their frequency, pass unnoticed.

The power of an author often shows itself in noble, but spontaneous, figures of speech; for it is the great writers who see new truths and deeper relations in the world about them which the old phrases will not express. Read the following passage from Bacon's "Advancement of Learning": —

But the greatest error of all the rest is the mistaking or misplacing of the last or furthest end of knowledge. For men have entered into a desire of learning and knowledge, sometimes upon a natural curiosity and inquisitive appetite; sometimes to entertain their minds with variety and delight; sometimes for ornament and reputation; and sometimes to enable them to victory of wit and contradiction; and most times for lucre and profession; and seldom sincerely to give a true account of their gift of reason, to the benefit and use of men: as if there were sought in knowledge a couch, whereupon to rest a searching and restless spirit; or a terrace, for a wandering and variable mind to walk up and down with a fair prospect; or a tower of state, for a proud mind to raise itself upon; or a fort or commanding ground, for strife and contention; or a shop, for profit or sale; and not a rich storehouse, for the glory of the Creator and the relief of man's estate.

Here the splendor of the imagery is no mere embellishment. Without it, Bacon could not have given adequate expression to his enthusiastic appreciation of

learning and his fine scorn for the unworthy uses to which it is sometimes put. At the same time, the figures elevate the passage from the ordinary levels of prose to a noble eloquence.

Between such simple, unstudied figures of speech as those cited on page 370 and the loftiest heights of poetic imagery, there is no essential distinction. The difference, great as it is, is a difference not of kind but of degree. If our feelings are active, we unconsciously enliven their expression by using figures of speech; for figurative language is natural to all men.

SIMILES AND METAPHORS

The most important figures of speech are the **simile** and the **metaphor.** Both of these are founded on **comparison;** they express, in different ways, our perception of the likeness between two objects or ideas.

When we say "A cat is like a tiger" or "The cat is as fierce as a tiger," we are making a **comparison,** but it is a comparison **of fact,** and our language is not figurative. We mean that a cat actually resembles a tiger in its appearance, habits, and disposition, and that the two creatures belong to the same order of animals.

If we go one step farther and say, "The soldier fought like a tiger," our expression is figurative. We do not mean that the soldier fought with his teeth and nails, but that he exhibited such strength, activity, and ferocity as to remind us of a tiger. Our comparison is still expressed in the form of a likeness: but it is no longer literal; it is imaginative. We have used a **simile.**

Finally, we may change "The soldier fought *like a tiger*" into "The soldier *was a tiger* in fight." The meaning is the same; but this time the comparison is not expressed; it is merely implied. Instead of *comparing* the soldier to a tiger, we have *called* him a tiger, — that is, we have actually applied to him the name of the animal which he resembles. Such an expression is called a **metaphor.**

A **simile,** then, expresses a figurative resemblance between two objects or ideas in the form of a comparison (usually with *like* or *as*). A **metaphor** indicates this resemblance by applying to one of the objects or ideas a word that literally designates the other.

Every simile may be compressed into a metaphor; every metaphor may be expanded into a simile.

The following examples from Shakspere will illustrate the difference between these two figures of speech. The first five are similes; the rest are metaphors. Change each simile into a metaphor and each metaphor into a simile, and observe the difference in effectiveness.

1. Like madness is the glory of this life.
2. It is too rash; too unadvised; too sudden;
   Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be
   Ere one can say "It lightens."
3. Your face, my thane, is as a book where men
   May read strange matters.
4. His power, like to a fangless lion,
   May offer, but not hold.
5. If we do now make our atonement well,
   Our peace will, like a broken limb united,
   Grow stronger for the breaking.
6. This rudeness is a sauce to his good wit,
   Which gives men stomach to digest his words
   With better appetite.
7. And why should Cæsar be a tyrant then?
   Poor man! I know he would not be a wolf,
   But that he sees the Romans are but sheep:
   He were no lion, were not Romans hinds.
8. Lowliness is young Ambition's ladder,
   Whereto the climber-upward turns his face;
   But when he once attains the upmost round,
   He straight unto the ladder turns his back,
   Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees
   By which he did ascend.

9. Boy! Lucius! Fast asleep! It is no matter;
Enjoy the honey-heavy dew of slumber.
Thou hast no figures nor no fantasies
Which busy care draws in the brains of men:
Therefore thou sleep'st so sound.

Similes are sometimes long and elaborate, as in the following lines from Goldsmith's "Traveller": —

As some lone miser, visiting his store,
Bends at his treasure, counts, recounts it o'er;
Hoards after hoards his rising raptures fill,
Yet still he sighs, for hoards are wanting still:
Thus to my breast alternate passions rise,
Pleased with each good that Heaven to man supplies:
Yet oft a sigh prevails, and sorrows fall,
To see the hoard of human bliss so small;
And oft I wish amidst the scene to find
Some spot to real happiness consigned,
Where my worn soul, each wandering hope at rest,
May gather bliss to see my fellows blest.

Such elaborate similes are often called "Homeric," because they occur frequently in the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey."

A metaphor, also, may be sustained and carried out to considerable length, as in the following passage from Gray's ode on "The Progress of Poesy": —

From Helicon's harmonious springs
A thousand rills their mazy progress take:
The laughing flowers that round them blow
Drink life and fragrance as they flow.
Now the rich stream of music winds along,
Deep, majestic, smooth, and strong,
Through verdant vales, and Ceres' golden reign:
Now, rolling down the steep amain,
Headlong, impetuous, see it pour;
The rocks and nodding groves rebellow to the roar.

A long metaphor is analogous, in its general effect, to a periodic sentence (p. 323). In both, the mind of the reader is, as it were, held in suspense till the end of the passage is reached.

Sometimes a simile and a metaphor are inextricably combined, as in the following passage from "Othello": —

> Like to the Pontic sea,
> Whose icy current and compulsive course
> Ne'er feels retiring ebb, but keeps due on
> To the Propontic and the Hellespont;
> Even so my bloody thoughts, with violent pace,
> Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble love,
> Till that a capable and wide revenge
> Swallow them up.

The following examples of metaphor and simile illustrate the use of these figures in prose: —

1. Do not suffer life to stagnate; it will grow muddy for want of motion. — JOHNSON.

2. One generation blows bubbles, and the next breaks them. — COWPER.

3. Bashfulness and apathy are a tough husk, in which a delicate organization is protected from premature ripening. — EMERSON.

4. His life was formal. His actions seemed ruled with a ruler. — LAMB.

5. In the first enjoyment of the state of life we discard the fear of debts and duns, and never think of the final payment of our great debt to Nature. — HAZLITT.

6. His [Milton's] poetry reminds us of the miracles of Alpine scenery. Nooks and dells, beautiful as fairyland, are embosomed in its most rugged and gigantic elevations. — MACAULAY.

7. We must read our classic with open eyes, and not with eyes blinded with superstition. — MATTHEW ARNOLD.

8. A man's nature runs either to herbs or weeds; therefore let him seasonably water the one, and destroy the other. — BACON.

9. Such a talent in verse as mine is like a child's rattle, — very entertaining to the trifler that uses it, and very disagreeable to all beside. — COWPER.

10. "The state of a mind oppressed with a sudden calamity," said Imlac, "is like that of the fabulous inhabitants of the new-created earth, who, when the first night came upon them, supposed that day never would return." — JOHNSON.

11. Prosperity often irritates our chronical distempers, and leaves no hope of finding any specific but in adversity. In such cases banishment is like change of air, and the evils we suffer are like rough medicines applied to inveterate diseases. — BOLINGBROKE.

12. A student unacquainted with the attempts of former adventurers is always apt to overrate his own abilities; to mistake the most trifling excursions for discoveries of moment, and every coast new to him for a new-found country. If by chance he passes beyond his usual limits, he congratulates his own arrival at those regions which those who have steered a better course have long left behind them. — SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

Metonymy is a figure by which the name of one object is given to another, not by way of comparison (as in metaphors), but because one suggests the other by some association of facts or ideas.

Examples: the *knife*, for *surgery;* the *press*, for the *newspapers;* *crown*, for *royal government;* the *plough*, for *agriculture;* a good *head*, for a good *mind;* a troop of *horse*, for a troop of *horsemen;* to address the *chair*, for the *chairman;* the *bench*, for the *judges;* to read *Shakspere*, for Shakspere's *works*.

PERSONIFICATION

Personification is a figure of speech which represents (1) a lifeless object, (2) one of the lower animals, or (3) an idea, quality, or other abstraction, **as a person,** — that is, as capable of thought, feeling, and speech. Thus, —

1. Thou sure and firm-set earth,
   Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
   Thy very stones prate of my whereabout. — SHAKSPERE.

2. They left me then, when the gray-hooded Ev'n,
Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed,
Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phœbus' wain. — MILTON.

3. Who loves not Knowledge? Who shall rail
Against her beauty? May she mix
With men and prosper! Who shall fix
Her pillars? Let her work prevail. — TENNYSON.

4. Boldness is a child of Ignorance and Baseness. — BACON.

5. Truth speaks too low, Hypocrisy too loud. — DRYDEN.

6. Red Battle stamps his foot, and nations feel the shock. — BYRON.

7. For Winter came: the wind was his whip;
One choppy finger was on his lip;
He had torn the cataracts from the hills,
And they clanked at his girdle like manacles. — SHELLEY.

8. There is another sort of imaginary beings that we sometimes meet with among the poets, when the author represents any passion, appetite, virtue, or vice under a visible shape, and makes it a person or an actor in his poem. Of this nature are the descriptions of Hunger and Envy in Ovid, of Fame in Virgil, and of Sin and Death in Milton. We find a whole creation of the like shadowy persons in Spenser, who had an admirable talent in representations of this kind. — ADDISON.

In the following passage from one of Gray's letters, whimsical personification gives a delicately humorous effect: —

Low spirits are my true and faithful companions; they get up with me, go to bed with me, make journeys and returns as I do; nay, and pay visits, and will even affect to be jocose and force a feeble laugh with me; but most commonly we sit alone together, and are the prettiest insipid company in the world.

The personification of lifeless objects is a natural tendency of the human mind, as may be seen from the talk of young children. The personification of abstract ideas is common in poetry and is the basis of all allegory. The personification of animals is perhaps a survival of a very

early stage of culture when animals were regarded as capable of thought and speech. It is commonest in fables.

APOSTROPHE

Apostrophe (that is, "turning away") is a figure by which the writer or speaker suddenly turns aside from the course which he is pursuing and addresses some person or personified object. Thus, —

> What trash is Rome,
> What rubbish and what offal, when it serves
> For the base matter to illuminate
> So vile a thing as Cæsar! But, *O grief,*
> *Where hast thou led me?* I perhaps speak this
> Before a willing bondman; then I know
> My answer must be made. — SHAKSPERE.

Famous examples of **apostrophe** are Byron's address to the sea in "Childe Harold," Canto IV, stanzas 179–184; Cowper's "O winter, ruler of the inverted year" in "The Task," Book IV; Macbeth to the dagger in "Macbeth," Act II, Scene 1; "Julius Cæsar," Act II, Scene 1, lines 77–85, and Act III, Scene 2, lines 109–110. For the same device in prose see the paragraph beginning "Alas, poor Clifford!" at the end of Chapter X of Hawthorne's "House of the Seven Gables"; Emerson's essay on "The Poet" (at the end); "Silence and desolation are upon thy walls, proud house," etc., in Lamb's "South-Sea House."

ALLEGORY

If a metaphor is developed at considerable length, the result may be an **allegorical tale** or **allegory.** In such a tale, the incidents are figurative and the characters are usually, though not always, personifications.

An example of a brief allegory may be found on page 316. Other well-known instances are Addison's "Vision

of Mirza" ("Spectator," No. 159) and his "Burdens of Mankind" ("Spectator," Nos. 558 and 559). The most famous long allegories in English are Spenser's "Faerie Queene" and Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress." But these are valued rather in spite of their allegorical intention than because of it, — "The Faerie Queene" for its poetical beauty and "The Pilgrim's Progress" for its narrative skill and its simple and vigorous English. Allegory as such is deservedly out of fashion. Either the moral purpose makes the plot and characters artificial, or else, if the characters are natural and the tale is well told, we disregard the allegorical purpose altogether, as most of us do in reading Bunyan. The device is too mechanical to give pleasure, except in very short stories.

Now and then, however, a subtle touch of allegory lends a peculiar charm to a tale. There is a good instance of this kind of suggestion in "The Chimæra," in Hawthorne's "Wonder Book." Here the veiled metaphorical significance of the different accounts of Pegasus which Bellerophon receives from different persons, is hinted at in a single exquisite paragraph: —

> And Bellerophon put his faith in the child, who had seen the image of Pegasus in the water, and in the maiden, who had heard him neigh so melodiously, rather than in the middle-aged clown, who believed only in cart-horses, or in the old man, who had forgotten the beautiful things of his youth.

The best comment on this veiled allegory of Hawthorne's is afforded by two noble passages in Bacon's essay "Of Youth and Age": —

> The invention of young men is more lively than that of old, and imaginations stream into their minds better, and, as it were, more divinely.

A certain rabbin, upon the text, "Your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams," inferreth that young men are admitted nearer to God than old, because a vision is a clearer revelation than a dream. And certainly, the more a man drinketh of the world, the more it intoxicateth; and age doth profit rather in the powers of the understanding than in the virtues of the will and affections.

USE AND ABUSE OF FIGURES

Similes and **metaphors,** as we have seen, are not mere adornments of style; they enhance the expressiveness of language. By indicating or suggesting comparisons, they make the thought clearer, and their picturesque quality stimulates the reader's attention.

We must be careful, however, not to multiply figures of speech beyond what the subject will bear. An excessively figurative, or **florid,**[1] style is tiresome and in bad taste. Display is as objectionable in language as in dress. Far-fetched or over-ingenious figures are also to be avoided, and the same is true of those that are commonplace or hackneyed. If one's imagination is awake, figures will suggest themselves spontaneously. If they have to be fished for, or painfully thought out, they are not likely to be worth the trouble.

We should also test the accuracy and soundness of a figure before using it in composition. If the comparison on which it depends is unreal or fantastic, the figure will darken the subject instead of illuminating it. Weak and ineffectual figures are called "frigid"; figures that are exaggerated and at the same time inappropriate, are called "bombastic." The extract from Sylvester criticised by

[1] That is, "flowery."

Dryden in the following passage illustrates both faults, — **frigidity** and **bombast**: —

When men affect a virtue which they cannot easily reach, they fall into a vice which bears the nearest resemblance to it. Thus an injudicious poet who aims at loftiness, runs easily into the swelling, puffy style, because it looks like greatness. I remember, when I was a boy, I thought inimitable Spenser a mean poet in comparison of Sylvester's *Dubartas*, and was rapt into an ecstasy when I read these lines: —

> "Now, when the winter's keener breath began
> To crystallize the Baltic ocean,
> To glaze the lakes, to bridle up the floods,
> And periwig with snow the bald-pate woods."

I am much deceived if this be not abominable fustian, that is, thoughts and words ill-sorted, and without the least relation to each other.

A figure should be consistent with itself. Careless writers frequently run two or three discordant metaphors into one, without regard to their incongruity.

Thus, a headlong orator, in denouncing his opponent, once cried out, "We must bring the *viper* to his *knees*." The bewildering maze of figures in the passage that follows was noticed in a recent newspaper: "When Mr. Hay began his work in 1899, the open door was an elusive dream. He crystallized it into form, and added to it the integrity of China, the preservation of which is now solemnly guaranteed by five great powers."

Such inconsistent metaphors are said to be "mixed."

Faulty combination of figures is a delicate subject, since everybody knows that the poets mix metaphors without scruple. It is easy, however, to make a distinction. The heat of a poet's imagination may fuse two metaphors so that their original incongruity is no longer perceived. But the mixed metaphors of unpractised

writers are not of this kind. They come, not from imaginative strength, but from defective vision, — from a failure to perceive the exact meaning of the several words. Besides, great authors may take liberties which beginners cannot justly claim. The following passage from "Macbeth" contains a mixed metaphor which no one would be bold enough to censure: —

> I have no spur
> To prick the sides of my intent, but only
> Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
> And falls on the other side.

Here Macbeth begins by speaking of his *intent* to murder Duncan as a horse which needs the *spur*, and by declaring that he has no such *spur* (or incentive) to commit the crime except his *ambition;* but he goes on to describe this same *ambition* under the figure of a would-be rider who *overleaps* himself in trying to *vault into the saddle* and gets a disastrous *fall*. The first figure is not finished before the second is begun.

SYNONYMS AND ANTONYMS

The English language is rich in **synonyms,** — that is, in different words for the same idea.

Thus, instead of *fatigued* (p. 12), Franklin might have said *tired*, *worn out*, *exhausted*, *used up*, or *weary;* for *walked* he might have said *went*, *proceeded*, *strolled*, or *sauntered*, — and so on. In each case, one of the other words mentioned would have expressed almost the same idea, but with some slight difference of meaning.

Franklin used *stuffed out* (p. 12) rather than *filled* in order to suggest his awkward and uncouth appearance. He wrote *walked*, rather than *sauntered* or *strolled*, because he wished to refer merely to his moving up the street, rather than to call attention to his gait or manner. In every instance he selected, out of a number of synonyms, that particular one which would express the precise shade of meaning that he desired to convey.

Synonymous words seldom have exactly the same signification. Even if there is no real difference in meaning, there is almost always a difference in emphasis, or in expressiveness, or in the associations which the words suggest (see p. 368).

A knowledge of synonyms, then, and of their distinctions is absolutely necessary in every kind of composition; for without such knowledge we cannot put our thoughts and feelings into vivid and appropriate language.

Words of opposite meaning are called **antonyms.** Thus, *weak* and *strong, crafty* and *simple, empty* and *full,* are antonyms. The **antonym** is the opposite of the **synonym.** In comparing one object or person with another, we observe both likeness and differences. When we observe similarity in the objects compared, the synonym comes to our aid, preventing tiresome repetitions. When we contrast objects and note characteristics in which they differ, we need the antonym to make our meaning clear.

Examples of synonyms and antonyms may be seen in the following extracts: —

1. Hurry, bustle, and agitation are the never-failing symptoms of a weak and frivolous mind. — CHESTERFIELD.

2. This is drollery rather than humor. — CARLYLE.

3. Griffiths was a hard business man, of shrewd, worldly good sense, but little refinement or cultivation. — IRVING.

4. Between excess and famine lies a mean;
Plain, but not sordid; though not splendid, clean. — POPE.

5. Generosity often runs into profusion, economy into avarice, courage into rashness, caution into timidity, and so on.
CHESTERFIELD.

6. A man is but an ill husband of his honor that entereth into any action the failing wherein may disgrace him more than the carrying of it through can honor him. — BACON.

7. The way before you is intricate, dark, and full of perplexed and treacherous mazes. — BURKE.

8. It was the disposition of Markham Everard to be hot, keen, earnest, impatient, and decisive to a degree of precipitation.

SCOTT.

9. Tories reviled and insulted Russell as his coach passed from the Tower to the scaffold. — MACAULAY.

10. Discoverers of truth are generally sober, modest, and humble; and, if their discoveries are less valued by mankind than they deserve to be, can bear the disappointment with patience and equality of temper. But hasty reasoners and confident asserters are generally wedded to an hypothesis, and, transported with joy at their fancied acquisitions, are impatient under contradiction, and grow wild at the thoughts of a refutation.

COWPER.

For other examples see the passages quoted on pages 330–331. For lists of synonyms and antonyms, and for exercises, see pages 436–437, 440–442.

CONCISENESS

A vigorous style[1] is almost always **concise.** We should use words enough to express our thoughts and feelings fully and clearly, but should aim at brevity in the body of our essays and should stop when we get through. Verbosity is the most tiresome of rhetorical faults. "An author," says Dryden, "is not to write all he can, but only all he ought."

It is good practice to go over a passage that we have written and strike out all the words that are not essential to the thought. This process may leave the passage rough and abrupt, and unfit for presentation; but the object lesson in conciseness will be valuable. We shall probably be surprised at the small number of words that are absolutely necessary.

[1] A vigorous style is often called **nervous** (from the Latin *nervus*, "sinew").

In many cases, the statement of one fact necessarily implies other facts, which it is superfluous to mention, except sometimes for the sake of emphasis. For example, if we say that "the day is bright," we need not add that "the sky is blue"; and if we have said that "the teamster beat his horses," we may take it for granted that he was cruel. In condensing, we should bear in mind the possibility of rearranging the sentences so as to bring the less important facts into subordinate clauses. A fact or an idea which is not valuable enough to have a sentence to itself, may be worth keeping in a less conspicuous position.

Excessive brevity may result in obscurity or abruptness. A telegram is typical of brevity, for it dispenses with everything but the mere skeleton of expression; but we all know that telegrams are frequently ambiguous and that they are seldom smooth or elegant in style. We should strive to write **tersely,**[1] — that is, with **polished conciseness,** but we should omit nothing that enriches the thought or that aids the reader's understanding and stimulates his attention. Mere excision of redundant words does not make a style terse: rearrangement and polishing are also necessary.

The degree of conciseness must vary with the nature of the subject and with the effect that we wish to produce. A leisurely style is appropriate to certain topics and kinds of writing. Thus, —

I love to search out the sunny slopes under some northern shelter where the reflected sun does double duty to the earth, and where the frail hepatica, or the faint blush of the arbutus, in the midst of the bleak March atmosphere, will touch your heart, like a hope of heaven in a field of graves. — Ik Marvel.

[1] *Terse* is often misused as a synonym for *short* or *pithy*. It is derived from the Latin *tersus*, "polished," and it implies finish as well as conciseness.

This might be cut down to —

I like the slopes protected from the north where the reflected sun brings out the hepatica and the arbutus in March.

Such treatment, however, would spoil the beauty of the passage. The bare outline of the thought would alone be left; all the sentiment and imaginative suggestion of the original would be destroyed. Here, again, we must be guided by the principles of appropriateness and expressiveness. The actual number of words can be determined only by the purpose of the writer.

The natural tendency of the English language is to be **copious** and **discursive.** We should be on our guard, therefore, against yielding to this tendency overmuch, or on inappropriate occasions. Few writers, young or old, are in any danger of being too concise.

REPETITION

Repetition is a natural tendency of language. We may often emphasize an idea, and make it clearer and easier to grasp, by presenting it from different points of view and in varying terms.

Note the repetition in the following passage: —

In order that a new world may step in, this world must for a time disappear. The murderers, and the murder, must be insulated — cut off by an immeasurable gulf from the ordinary tide and succession of human affairs — locked up and sequestered in some deep recess; we must be made sensible that the world of ordinary life is suddenly arrested — laid asleep — tranced — racked into a dread armistice; time must be annihilated; relation to things without, abolished; and all must pass self-withdrawn into a deep syncope and suspension of earthly passion.

De Quincey.

Compare the beginning of Macbeth's soliloquy: —

> If it were done when 't is done, then 't were well
> It were done quickly: if the assassination
> Could trammel up the consequence, and catch,
> With his surcease, success; that but this blow
> Might be the be-all and the end-all here, —
> But here, upon this bank and shoal of time, —
> We 'd jump the life to come.

Here the single thought in Macbeth's mind is, "If the murder and all that it involves were done with when the blow is struck, then the sooner I kill Duncan the better." This thought is expressed literally, in the first clause, and then is dwelt on, in varying figures of speech, till the end of the passage.

Expository writing makes frequent use of **repetition,** as in the following paragraph from Matthew Arnold: —

> And because men are all members of one great whole, and the sympathy which is in human nature will not allow one member to be indifferent to the rest, or to have a perfect welfare independent of the rest, the expansion of our humanity, to suit the idea of perfection which culture forms, must be a *general* expansion. Perfection, as culture conceives it, is not possible while the individual remains isolated. The individual is required, under pain of being stunted and enfeebled in his own development if he disobeys, to carry others along with him in his march towards perfection, to be continually doing all he can to enlarge and increase the volume of the human stream sweeping thitherward. And here, once more, culture lays on us the same obligation as religion, which says, as Bishop Wilson has admirably put it, that "to promote the kingdom of God is to increase and hasten one's own happiness."

The gist of the paragraph might be given in a single sentence: "Culture in the individual cannot be separated from culture in the race." This thought is repeated several

times, with variations, until it becomes perfectly clear in its application and finds permanent lodgement in the reader's mind.[1]

Excessive and purposeless repetition is a tiresome fault. Such repetition is called **tautology,** — that is, "saying the same thing over again."

Common tautologous phrases are: — *funeral obsequies, kill him dead, food and sustenance, trouble and annoyance, blood and gore, quarrelling and disputing, first beginning, final* (or *last*) *end, final outcome, new and novel, brave and daring, sure and certain, weak and feeble.*

Many similar phrases are established **idioms:** as, — *end and aim, without let or hindrance, goods and chattels, act and deed, purpose or end, ways and means, over and done with, free and clear, safe and sound.*

Repetition, then, though of great utility when skilfully managed, is often a serious fault. The only test by which we can determine whether a word is actually **redundant** is to observe whether it can be spared without loss. Common sense prescribes that we should use only such words as are needed to produce the effect intended in each case. In such a sentence as "He fell down and jumped up again," *down* and *again* are not redundant; for without them the sentence lacks emphasis and expressiveness. So, in "I saw it *with my own eyes*," the italicized phrase makes the statement more personal and forcible. On the other hand, the phrases quoted in the second paragraph on this page are plain examples of redundancy, for the tautologous words may be omitted without loss and with a manifest gain in vigor.

Redundancy is also called **pleonasm.**

[1] This method of constructing a paragraph by repetition of the topic sentence in various forms is a favorite device with Matthew Arnold, who is, indeed, somewhat over-fond of it. See also p. 307.

MEANS OF ENLARGING ONE'S VOCABULARY

As our knowledge increases and we have occasion to express our thoughts on a greater variety of subjects, we feel the need of a greater stock of words. Wide and attentive reading is the best way to **enlarge one's vocabulary,** but there are special means that assist to the same end.

Some great writers have been fond of studying the dictionary; many people make lists of new words that they hear or come across in books. Another good plan is to find synonyms for common words. Still another is to play a kind of game in which, as you go along the street, you try to fit each house, or person, or animal that you see, with an apt word or phrase. A great French writer once told a young man that to attain a perfect mastery of style he must be able to find a separate phrase for every cab-horse in Paris.

Study of a foreign language is an excellent means of enlarging your English vocabulary, if you are willing to take pains with your translations. When you look up a Latin or French or German word in your dictionary, do not rest satisfied with the first meaning you come to, or with the first that will satisfy your immediate needs. Read through all the meanings, so that you may get a feeling for the sense of the word in question. Thus you will increase your command of the foreign language, and will add to your English vocabulary at the same time. In translating, try to find the word or phrase which best expresses the exact shade of meaning of the original. Note **differences of idiom,** and endeavor to reproduce in English the tone and style of the passage that you are rendering. A bald and literal version misrepresents the original and is likely to be bad English as well.

One thing is always necessary in the attempt to increase one's vocabulary, and that is attention. If your mind is on the alert, every book that you read and every sensible conversation in which you engage may add to your stock. Cultivate a quick ear and a ready eye for new words, and an intelligent curiosity about their meaning and their origin. Such an interest will do much to fix them in your mind. Whenever you make the acquaintance of a new subject, familiarize yourself with the vocabulary needed to discuss it properly. Thus your vocabulary and your knowledge will always stand in a proper relation to each other.

CLEARNESS

Our study of composition has passed in review the different kinds of writing and has considered the special principles and methods of each, as well as the requirements which apply to them all alike. Of all these general requirements none is of such primary importance as **clearness** (or **perspicuity**), for without this quality there can be no real expression of thought.

The most serious offence against clearness is **ambiguity,** — that is, the use of language that may be taken in more senses than one. Ambiguity may result from an unskilful choice of words, from confusion of grammatical constructions, or from a faulty arrangement of the sentence. We should therefore give particular heed to our pronouns (especially *he, it, who,* and *which*) and to the position of every modifying phrase or clause (see p. 449).

Even when our language is not ambiguous, it may be vague, obscure, or so involved as to be difficult to follow. Unless we think clearly, we cannot write clearly; but when

our thoughts are clear, we can always express them intelligibly if we are willing to take pains enough. Hence we should criticise our own style mercilessly, revise with extreme care, and never be satisfied until we feel sure that nobody can help understanding what we have written. When we have once learned to write clearly, the chances are that force and elegance are within our reach. At all events, we have accomplished the main end of **composition as a practical art.**

ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTIONS

The extracts on pages 391–400 afford good examples of paragraphing, of sentence structure, and of words effectively used.

I. TANGLEWOOD PORCH[1]

By Hawthorne

Beneath the porch of the country-seat called Tanglewood, one fine autumnal morning, was assembled a merry party of little folks, with a tall youth in the midst of them. They had planned a nutting expedition, and were impatiently waiting for the mists to roll up the hill-slopes, and for the sun to pour the warmth of the Indian summer over the fields and pastures, and into the nooks of the many-colored woods. There was a prospect of as fine a day as ever gladdened the aspect of this beautiful and comfortable world. As yet, however, the morning mist filled up the whole length and breadth of the valley, above which, on a gently sloping eminence, the mansion stood.

This body of white vapor extended to within less than a hundred yards of the house. It completely hid everything beyond that distance, except a few ruddy or yellow tree-tops, which here and there emerged, and were glorified by the early sunshine, as was likewise the broad surface of the mist. Four or five miles

[1] From "A Wonder-Book for Girls and Boys."

off to the southward rose the summit of Monument Mountain, and seemed to be floating on a cloud. Some fifteen miles farther away, in the same direction, appeared the loftier Dome of Taconic, looking blue and indistinct, and hardly so substantial as the vapory sea that almost rolled over it. The nearer hills, which bordered the valley, were half submerged, and were specked with little cloud-wreaths all the way to their tops. On the whole, there was so much cloud, and so little solid earth, that it had the effect of a vision.

The children above-mentioned, being as full of life as they could hold, kept overflowing from the porch of Tanglewood, and scampering along the gravel walk, or rushing across the dewy herbage of the lawn. I can hardly tell how many of these small people there were; not less than nine or ten, however, nor more than a dozen, of all sorts, sizes, and ages, whether girls or boys. They were brothers, sisters, and cousins, together with a few of their young acquaintances, who had been invited by Mr. and Mrs. Pringle to spend some of this delightful weather with their own children, at Tanglewood. I am afraid to tell you their names, or even to give them any names which other children have ever been called by; because, to my certain knowledge, authors sometimes get themselves into great trouble by accidently giving the names of real persons to the characters in their books. For this reason, I mean to call them Primrose, Periwinkle, Sweet Fern, Dandelion, Blue Eye, Clover, Huckleberry, Cowslip, Squash-blossom, Milkweed, Plantain, and Buttercup; although, to be sure, such titles might better suit a group of fairies than a company of earthly children.

It is not to be supposed that these little folks were to be permitted by their careful fathers and mothers, uncles, aunts, or grandparents, to stray abroad into the woods and fields, without the guardianship of some particularly grave and elderly person. O no, indeed! In the first sentence of my book, you will recollect that I spoke of a tall youth, standing in the midst of the children. His name — (and I shall let you know his real name, because he considers it a great honor to have told the stories that are here to be printed) — his name was Eustace Bright. He was a student at Williams College, and had reached, I think, the venerable age of eighteen years; so that he felt quite like a grandfather towards Periwinkle, Dandelion, Huckleberry, Squash-blossom, Milkweed,

and the rest, who were only half or a third as venerable as he. A trouble in his eyesight (such as many students think it necessary to have, nowadays, in order to prove their diligence at their books) had kept him from college a week or two after the beginning of the term. But, for my part, I have seldom met with a pair of eyes that looked as if they could see farther or better than those of Eustace Bright.

This learned student was slender, and rather pale, as all Yankee students are; but yet of a healthy aspect, and as light and active as if he had wings to his shoes. By the by, being much addicted to wading through streamlets and across meadows, he had put on cowhide boots for the expedition. He wore a linen blouse, a cloth cap, and a pair of green spectacles, which he had assumed, probably, less for the preservation of his eyes, than for the dignity that they imparted to his countenance. In either case, however, he might as well have let them alone; for Huckleberry, a mischievous little elf, crept behind Eustace as he sat on the steps of the porch, snatched the spectacles from his nose, and clapped them on her own; and as the student forgot to take them back, they fell off into the grass, and lay there till the next spring.

II. HOUSEKEEPING

By Jane Welsh Carlyle[1]

So many talents are wasted, so many enthusiasms turned to smoke, so many lives spoiled for want of a little patience and endurance, for want of understanding and laying to heart the meaning of *the Present*, — for want of recognizing that it is not the greatness or littleness of "the duty nearest hand," but the spirit in which one does it, that makes one's doing noble or mean! I can't think how many people who have any natural ambition and any sense of power in them, escape going mad in a world like this without the recognition of *that*. I know I was very near mad when I found it out for myself (as one has to find out for one's self everything that is to be of any real practical use to one).

Shall I tell you how it came into my head? Perhaps it may be of comfort to you in similar moments of fatigue and disgust.

[1] From a letter in Froude's "Life of Carlyle," Vol. II, Chapter II.

I had gone with my husband to live on a little estate of peat bog that had descended to me all the way down from John Welsh, the Covenanter, who married a daughter of John Knox. *That* did n't, I am ashamed to say, make me feel Craigenputtock a whit less of a peat bog, and a most dreary, untoward place to live at. In fact, it was sixteen miles distant on every side from all the conveniences of life, — shops and even post office. Further, we were very poor, and further (and worst), being an only child, and brought up to "great prospects," I was sublimely ignorant of every branch of useful knowledge, though a capital Latin scholar and very fair mathematician.

It behooved me in these astonishing circumstances to learn to sew. Husbands, I was shocked to find, wore their stockings into holes, and were always losing buttons, and *I* was expected to "look to all that." Also it behooved me to learn to cook! no capable servant choosing to live at such an out-of-the-way place, and my husband having bad digestion, which complicated my difficulties dreadfully. The *bread*, above all, brought from Dumfries, "soured on his stomach" (O heaven!), and it was plainly my duty as a Christian wife to bake at home.

So I sent for Cobbett's "Cottage Economy," and fell to work at a loaf of bread. But, knowing nothing about the process of fermentation or the heat of ovens, it came to pass that my loaf got put into the oven at the time that myself ought to have been put into bed; and I remained the only person not asleep in a house in the middle of a desert.

One o'clock struck, and then two, and then three; and still I was sitting there in an immense solitude, my whole body aching with weariness, my heart aching with a sense of forlornness and degradation. That I, who had been so petted at home, whose comfort had been studied by everybody in the house, who had never been required to do anything but cultivate my mind, should have to pass all those hours of the night in watching a loaf of bread, — which might n't turn out bread after all! Such thoughts maddened me, till I laid down my head on the table and sobbed aloud.

It was then that somehow the idea of Benvenuto Cellini sitting up all night watching his Perseus in the furnace came into my head, and suddenly I asked myself: "After all, in the sight of

the upper powers, what is the mighty difference between a statue of Perseus and a loaf of bread, so that each be the thing that one's hand has found to do? The man's determined will, his energy, his patience, his resource, were the really admirable things, of which his statue of Perseus was the mere chance expression. If he had been a woman living at Craigenputtock, with a dyspeptic husband, sixteen miles from a baker, and he a bad one, all these qualities would have come out more fitly in a *good* loaf of bread."

I cannot express what consolation this germ of an idea spread over my uncongenial life during the years we lived at that savage place, where my two immediate predecessors had gone mad, and the third had taken to drink.

III. THE SIEGE OF ARCOT[1]

By Macaulay

Clive was now twenty-five years old. After hesitating for some time between a military and a commercial life, he had at length been placed in a post which partook of both characters, that of commissary to the troops, with the rank of captain. The present emergency called forth all his powers. He represented to his superiors that, unless some vigorous effort were made, Trichinopoly would fall, the house of Anaverdy Khan would perish, and the French would become the real masters of the whole peninsula of India. It was absolutely necessary to strike some daring blow. If an attack were made on Arcot, the capital of the Carnatic, and the favorite residence of the Nabobs, it was not impossible that the siege of Trichinopoly would be raised. The heads of the English settlement, now thoroughly alarmed by the success of Dupleix, and apprehensive that, in the event of a new war between France and Great Britain, Madras would be instantly taken and destroyed, approved of Clive's plan, and intrusted the execution of it to himself. The young captain was put at the head of two hundred English soldiers, and three hundred sepoys, armed and disciplined after the European fashion. Of the eight officers who commanded this little force under him,

[1] From the essay on "Lord Clive."

only two had ever been in action, and four of the eight were factors of the Company, whom Clive's example had induced to offer their services. The weather was stormy; but Clive pushed on, through thunder, lightning, and rain, to the gates of Arcot. The garrison, in a panic, evacuated the fort, and the English entered it without a blow.

But Clive well knew that he should not be suffered to retain undisturbed possession of his conquest. He instantly began to collect provisions, to throw up works, and to make preparations for sustaining a siege. The garrison, which had fled at his approach, had now recovered from its dismay, and, having been swollen by large reinforcements from the neighborhood to a force of three thousand men, encamped close to the town. At dead of night, Clive marched out of the fort, attacked the camp by surprise, slew great numbers, dispersed the rest, and returned to his quarters without having lost a single man.

The intelligence of these events was soon carried to Chunda Sahib, who, with his French allies, was besieging Trichinopoly. He immediately detached four thousand men from his camp, and sent them to Arcot. They were speedily joined by the remains of the force which Clive had lately scattered. They were further strengthened by two thousand men from Vellore, and by a still more important reinforcement of a hundred and fifty French soldiers whom Dupleix despatched from Pondicherry. The whole of this army, amounting to about ten thousand men, was under the command of Rajah Sahib, son of Chunda Sahib.

Rajah Sahib proceeded to invest the fort of Arcot, which seemed quite incapable of sustaining a siege. The walls were ruinous, the ditches dry, the ramparts too narrow to admit the guns, the battlements too low to protect the soldiers. The little garrison had been greatly reduced by casualties. It now consisted of a hundred and twenty Europeans and two hundred sepoys. Only four officers were left; the stock of provisions was scanty; and the commander, who had to conduct the defence under circumstances so discouraging, was a young man of five and twenty, who had been bred a bookkeeper.

During fifty days the siege went on. During fifty days the young captain maintained the defence, with a firmness, vigilance, and ability which would have done honor to the oldest

marshal in Europe. The breach, however, increased day by day. The garrison began to feel the pressure of hunger. Under such circumstances, any troops so scantily provided with officers might have been expected to show signs of insubordination ; and the danger was peculiarly great in a force composed of men differing widely from each other in extraction, color, language, manners, and religion. But the devotion of the little band to its chief surpassed anything that is related of the Tenth Legion of Cæsar, or of the Old Guard of Napoleon. The sepoys came to Clive, not to complain of their scanty fare, but to propose that all the grain should be given to the Europeans, who required more nourishment than the natives of Asia. The thin gruel, they said, which was strained away from the rice, would suffice for themselves. History contains no more touching instance of military fidelity, or of the influence of a commanding mind.

An attempt made by the government of Madras to relieve the place had failed. But there was hope from another quarter. A body of six thousand Mahrattas, half soldiers, half robbers, under the command of a chief named Morari Row, had been hired to assist Mohammed Ali; but, thinking the French power irresistible, and the triumph of Chunda Sahib certain, they had hitherto remained inactive on the frontiers of the Carnatic. The fame of the defence of Arcot roused them from their torpor. Morari Row declared that he had never before believed that Englishmen could fight, but that he would willingly help them since he saw that they had spirit to help themselves. Rajah Sahib learned that the Mahrattas were in motion. It was necessary for him to be expeditious. He first tried negotiation. He offered large bribes to Clive, which were rejected with scorn. He vowed that, if his proposals were not accepted, he would instantly storm the fort, and put every man in it to the sword. Clive told him in reply, with characteristic haughtiness, that his father was an usurper, that his army was a rabble, and that he would do well to think twice before he sent such poltroons into a breach defended by English soldiers.

Rajah Sahib determined to storm the fort. The day was well suited to a bold military enterprise. It was the great Mohammedan festival which is sacred to the memory of Hosein the son of Ali. The history of Islam contains nothing more touching

than the event which gave rise to that solemnity. The mournful legend relates how the chief of the Fatimites, when all his brave followers had perished round him, drank his latest draught of water, and uttered his latest prayer, how the assassins carried his head in triumph, how the tyrant smote the lifeless lips with his staff, and how a few old men recollected with tears that they had seen those lips pressed to the lips of the Prophet of God. After the lapse of near twelve centuries, the recurrence of this solemn season excites the fiercest and saddest emotions in the bosoms of the devout Moslems of India. They work themselves up to such agonies of rage and lamentation that some, it is said, have given up the ghost from the mere effect of mental excitement. They believe that whoever, during this festival, falls in arms against the infidels, atones by his death for all the sins of his life, and passes at once to the garden of the Houris. It was at this time that Rajah Sahib determined to assault Arcot. Stimulating drugs were employed to aid the effect of religious zeal, and the besiegers, drunk with enthusiasm, drunk with bang, rushed furiously to the attack.

Clive had received secret intelligence of the design, had made his arrangements, and, exhausted by fatigue, had thrown himself on his bed. He was awakened by the alarm, and was instantly at his post. The enemy advanced, driving before them elephants whose foreheads were armed with iron plates. It was expected that the gates would yield to the shock of these living battering-rams. But the huge beasts no sooner felt the English musket-balls than they turned round, and rushed furiously away, trampling on the multitude which had urged them forward. A raft was launched on the water which filled one part of the ditch. Clive, perceiving that his gunners at the post did not understand their business, took the management of a piece of artillery himself, and cleared the raft in a few minutes. Where the moat was dry, the assailants mounted with great boldness; but they were received with a fire so heavy and so well-directed, that it soon quelled the courage even of fanaticism and of intoxication. The rear ranks of the English kept the front ranks supplied with a constant succession of loaded muskets, and every shot told on the living mass below. After three desperate onsets, the besiegers retired behind the ditch.

The struggle lasted about an hour. Four hundred of the assailants fell. The garrison lost only five or six men. The besieged passed an anxious night, looking for a renewal of the attack. But when day broke, the enemy were no more to be seen. They had retired, leaving to the English several guns and a large quantity of ammunition.

IV. THE DEFINITION OF A GENTLEMAN[1]

By Newman

Hence it is that it is almost a definition of a gentleman to say he is one who never inflicts pain. This description is both refined and, as far as it goes, accurate. He is mainly occupied in merely removing the obstacles which hinder the free and unembarrassed action of those about him; and he concurs with their movements rather than takes the initiative himself. His benefits may be considered as parallel to what are called comforts or conveniences in arrangements of a personal nature: like an easy chair or a good fire, which do their part in dispelling cold and fatigue, though nature provides both means of rest and animal heat without them. The true gentleman in like manner carefully avoids whatever may cause a jar or a jolt in the minds of those with whom he is cast, — all clashing of opinion, or collision of feeling, all restraint, or suspicion, or gloom, or resentment; his great concern being to make every one at his ease and at home. He has his eyes on all his company; he is tender towards the bashful, gentle towards the distant, and merciful towards the absurd; he can recollect to whom he is speaking; he guards against unseasonable allusions, or topics which may irritate; he is seldom prominent in conversation, and never wearisome. He makes light of favors while he does them, and seems to be receiving when he is conferring. He never speaks of himself except when compelled, never defends himself by a mere retort; he has no ears for slander or gossip, is scrupulous in imputing motives to those who interfere with him, and interprets everything for the best. He is never mean or little in his disputes, never takes unfair advantage, never mistakes personalities or

[1] From "The Idea of a University."

sharp sayings for arguments, or insinuates evil which he dare not say out. From a long-sighted prudence, he observes the maxim of the ancient sage, that we should ever conduct ourselves towards our enemy as if he were one day to be our friend. He has too much good sense to be affronted at insults, he is too well employed to remember injuries, and too indolent to bear malice. He is patient, forbearing, and resigned, on philosophical principles; he submits to pain, because it is inevitable, to bereavement, because it is irreparable, and to death, because it is his destiny.

If he engages in controversy of any kind, his disciplined intellect preserves him from the blundering discourtesy of better, perhaps, but less educated minds; who, like blunt weapons, tear and hack instead of cutting clean, who mistake the point in argument, waste their strength on trifles, misconceive their adversary, and leave the question more involved than they find it. He may be right or wrong in his opinion, but he is too clear-headed to be unjust; he is as simple as he is forcible, and as brief as he is decisive. Nowhere shall we find greater candor, consideration, indulgence: he throws himself into the minds of his opponents, he accounts for their mistakes. He knows the weakness of human reason as well as its strength, its province and its limits.

If he be an unbeliever, he will be too profound and large-minded to ridicule religion or to act against it; he is too wise to be a dogmatist or fanatic in his infidelity. He respects piety and devotion; he even supports institutions as venerable, beautiful, or useful, to which he does not assent; he honors the ministers of religion, and it contents him to decline its mysteries without assailing or denouncing them. He is a friend of religious toleration, and that, not only because his philosophy has taught him to look on all forms of faith with an impartial eye, but also from the gentleness and effeminacy of feeling, which is the attendant on civilization.

LETTER-WRITING

INTRODUCTORY

Most people use what they know of the **art of composition** more frequently in **writing letters** than in any other way. If they are well-trained in this art, so that they can express their thoughts freely, clearly, and agreeably, their letters are likely to be effective as well as pleasant to read. On the other hand, ignorance or neglect of the principles of composition defeats the whole purpose of letter-writing. An illegible and badly spelled letter, not divided into paragraphs, and defying every principle of unity, not only confuses and annoys the recipient, but gives him a poor opinion of the writer's intelligence and education.

Letters fall roughly into two main classes, — **business letters** and **familiar** (or **friendly**) **letters.** The distinction is due partly to a difference in the relations between the writer and the recipient, but still more to a difference in purpose. A business letter is usually a **statement of facts** or an **exposition;** sometimes it contains **argument.** A familiar or friendly letter may, of course, be expository or argumentative, but it more commonly gives an account of one's own experiences or describes persons and places that one has seen. Thus it is likely to use the methods of **narration** and **description.** There is, however, no sharp and clear line between the two kinds of correspondence; for we often have to write to our friends on business, and a letter to a stranger may contain narrative or descriptive

matter. In such cases, the difference is rather in tone and manner than in form or contents. The relation between the correspondents is always an important consideration in letter-writing.

THE PARTS OF A LETTER

The principles which govern all composition apply to letter-writing. The writer should have definitely in mind what he wishes to say, should make his meaning clear, and should express himself in a style appropriate to the subject and the occasion. But letter-writing has also its special rules or conventions as to **form** and **arrangement.** These rules derive their authority from custom, and are justified by their convenience. Their object is to make our letters intelligible with the least possible trouble to our correspondents. Certain forms are generally agreed upon, which it is only sensible to regard. Short notes to intimate friends may dispense with ceremony, but even in these the settled customs of letter-writing are usually followed.

A letter consists of the following parts: —

I. The **heading.** — This should contain the writer's address in full and the date. Thus,—

260 Caroline St.,
Saratoga, N.Y.,
Jan. 7, 1907.

Hobart College,
Geneva, N.Y.,
Oct. 8, 1906.

Waco, Kansas,
Feb. 3, 1907.

Marshfield, Mass.,
Dec. 2, 1906.

For the position of the heading, see the letters on pages 408–412. The different items which make up the headings should be kept together, as in the examples. The address, when it is given in the heading, should not be repeated after the signature.

II. The **salutation.** — This takes various forms according to the relation between the writer and the recipient. Thus, —

Dear Madam,	My dear Sir,
My dear Madam,	Dear Sirs,
Dear Sir,	Gentlemen:

are appropriate salutations in business letters.

Dear Mr. Jackson,	My dear Mrs. Hatch,
Dear Mrs. Erroll,	My dear Miss Fernald,

are proper in friendly letters, or in business letters addressed to a person whom one knows well.

My dear John,	Dear Edith,
Dear James,	Dear Uncle,
Dear Cousin Mary,	My dear Elizabeth,

are proper in familiar letters. "My dear Mrs. Hatch" is more formal than "Dear Mrs. Hatch."

The salutation may be followed by a comma, by a comma and a dash, by a colon, or by a colon and a dash. The comma is least formal. In business letters, the colon (with or without the dash) is often preferred, especially after "Gentlemen."

For the position of the salutation, see pages 408–412. In formal business letters, it is usual to insert the name and address of the recipient before the salutation. See this arrangement in No. 1, on page 408. In more familiar letters, the address is often placed below the signature and at the left of the page (as in No. 6), but it is frequently omitted altogether (as in No. 8).

III. The **body of the letter.** — This consists of the message itself. It should be legibly written, properly punctuated, and, unless it is very short, divided into paragraphs, each of which should cover a single point completely.

IV. The **formal closing.** — This is merely a courteous phrase, indicating the relation in which the writer stands to his correspondent. Thus, in business letters, —

Yours truly,	Yours sincerely,
Very truly yours,	Sincerely yours,
Respectfully yours,	Very sincerely yours.

Or, in familiar or affectionate letters, —

Faithfully yours,	Your loving son,
Yours cordially,	Yours, with love.

Observe that the forms given in the first list are not all suitable for every kind of business letter. "Yours truly" or "Very truly yours" will fit almost any such letter. The forms with "sincerely" are more intimate and less formal; they are common in friendly letters of a business character, and in other letters between correspondents who are acquainted, but not necessarily on familiar terms. "Respectfully yours" should never be used unless special respect is intended. It is proper in writing to a high official or to a person much older than one's self. In an ordinary business letter, however, it should not be used. It is in very questionable taste, for instance, to write "Yours respectfully" in such a letter as No. 1, p. 408. When in doubt, write "Very truly yours," which is always safe.

V. The **signature.** — Except in very familiar letters, this is the name of the writer in the form which he habitually uses in signing a document.

When a lady writes a business letter, she should indicate whether she is to be addressed as *Miss* or as *Mrs.* This information may be given by prefixing the title (*in parentheses*) to the signature: — (*Miss*) *Alice Atherton* (see No. 1, p. 408). Or the proper form may be written below the signature, and at the left of the page.

The signature should be so clearly written that it cannot be mistaken. There is no more foolish affectation than a showy signature which is hard to read.

VI. The **superscription** or the **direction.** — This is written on the envelope, and consists of the name and address of the person to whom the letter is sent.

Mr. John Eliot Newell
65 State Street
Richmond
Virginia

[Or, — John Eliot Newell, Esq.]

Commas are not needed at the ends of lines in the superscription, though they are used in giving the address inside the letter. An abbreviation, however, should of course be followed by a period (as *St.* for *Street*).

The superscription should include the name, the street and number (or the post-office box), and all other necessary details in the conventional order. The address on the envelope is for the people in the post office, who have to sort and distribute an inconceivable number of letters every day. Bad handwriting and every deviation from the regular order are stumbling-blocks to them, and may therefore result in delaying the letter.

BUSINESS LETTERS

In writing a **business letter,** you should remember that you are addressing a man who has no time to waste, and who wants to learn certain specific facts as quickly and as accurately as possible. On the facts which you set before him he will act, and his action may mean profit or loss to both of you.

A **business letter** should therefore set forth the facts which you think the recipient ought to know, and no other facts. It should state these facts as clearly and concisely as possible, and should make each separate fact stand out distinctly by itself, so that it will catch the reader's attention at once.

When any explanation of the facts or of their bearings is necessary, each separate point should be discussed by itself, and the result of the discussion should be explicitly stated, so that there can be no misunderstanding. If any point has to be argued, due regard must be paid to the opinions and prejudices of your correspondent. You must look at the case from his point of view, and try to make him see that what you propose is in accord with his own interests; otherwise you are not likely to convince him.

Brevity is of the utmost importance. Ornament, elaboration, and needless detail are intolerable in a business letter. They are "unbusinesslike," and will give your correspondent a poor opinion of you and of what you propose. In your efforts to be brief, however, you should take care not to be obscure, and should not omit any details that are really necessary. Excessive brevity results in abruptness, which gives the impression of haste or discourtesy. **The "telegraphic style," which omits the pronoun *I* and uses all kinds of shorthand expressions, is in very bad taste in a letter.**

In **replying** to a business letter, you should first acknowledge the receipt of your correspondent's letter, mentioning the date on which it was written, or giving some other mark of identification. Any enclosure which your correspondent has made should be duly acknowledged, either by the general phrase, "with enclosures as stated," or, in more important cases, by naming the enclosures separately.

It is often wise to recite briefly the general tenor of the letter that you are answering. Then you should take up each point, — if possible in the order observed in your correspondent's letter; this will make it easier for both parties to compare the correspondence. You should answer directly and definitely such questions as your correspondent has asked, make any explanation which seems necessary, and then go on to any new subject which you wish to raise.

In business letters it is well to give a separate paragraph to each of the points on which you are conveying information, or asking for information.

Business letters should be answered by return mail if possible. If you can do no more, you should send a line acknowledging the receipt of the letter and promising to attend to it immediately.

FRIENDLY LETTERS

Friendly letters, as we have seen, aim to do rather more than merely to convey information; they aim to give pleasure as well. In such letters, then, we try to write more vividly than in ordinary business communications; we describe things that seem likely to interest our friends, and we tell amusing or exciting incidents that have come to our notice. We also express ourselves less formally and with greater freedom.

Since our object in such a letter is to make some one understand what we are doing and enter into our feelings, we should always consider whether our correspondent is already acquainted with the persons or places that we are to mention. If he is not, we naturally give a good deal of our space to describing them; if he is, we may come to

the subject at once, without any preliminary description. The best guiding principle is to write such letters as we ourselves should like to receive.

SPECIMENS OF LETTER-WRITING

The following examples illustrate different kinds of letter-writing. Nos. 1–7 are **business letters** (Nos. 6 and 7 being less formal than the other five); Nos. 8–12 are **familiar letters** (No. 10 being a **letter of introduction** addressed to a friend).

I

197 Auburn Street,
Watertown, N.Y.,
April 7, 1907.

The Reynolds Publishing Co.,
44 Fifth Avenue,
New York City.

Gentlemen:

I enclose a check for three dollars in renewal of my subscription to the "Empire State Review." Please note that I have changed my residence.

The new address is 197 Auburn Street, Watertown, N.Y.
The old address was 48 Elm Avenue, Watertown, N.Y.

Very truly yours,
(Mrs.) Mary E. Harrison.

II

Gilmanton, N.H.,
March 19, 1907.

Mr. Robert Emerson Taylor,
Secretary of Monroe College,
Camden, N.Y.

Dear Sir:

Please send me a copy of the latest annual catalogue of Monroe College, together with the pamphlet describing the college dormitories.

Very truly yours,
John W. Chester.

III

Gilmanton, N. H.,
March 27, 1907.

Mr. Robert Emerson Taylor,
Secretary of Monroe College,
Camden, N.Y.

Dear Sir:

I have received the catalogue which you were kind enough to send me a few days ago, but one point in regard to the conditions of admission is not quite clear to me. I should be greatly obliged if you would tell me whether or not a candidate who failed to pass the June examination in plane geometry would be admitted to another examination in the same subject in the following September.

Very truly yours,
John W. Chester.

IV

101 Penn Avenue,
Germantown, Pa.,
July 24, 1907.

Messrs. Carter & Roberts,
287 Inman Street,
Philadelphia, Pa.

Gentlemen:

On Tuesday last, and again on Thursday, our family dinner was delayed half an hour because the day's supply of provisions, ordered from your market, failed to reach us on time. On Saturday, the sixth of this month, we had to send out to a neighboring market, because your delivery clerk left the wrong order, and on the following Monday our provisions arrived at half past seven in the evening.

I have twice called your attention by telephone to these annoying delays, and now I feel compelled to say that, unless we can count on receiving our supplies regularly by five o'clock in the afternoon, we shall have to place our orders elsewhere. We should very much regret such a necessity, for we have never had occasion to complain either of your prices or of the quality of your goods;

but you will agree, I am sure, that a continuance of the irregularities I have described can hardly be tolerated.

Very truly yours,

CHARLES H. HAMILTON.

V

287 INMAN STREET,
PHILADELPHIA,
July 25, 1907.

COL. CHARLES H. HAMILTON,
101 Penn Avenue,
Germantown, Pa.

DEAR SIR:

We hasten to apologize for the series of vexatious delays of which you very properly complain in your letter of July 24. The delivery clerk who was responsible for these errors has been obliged to do the work of two men during the last few weeks, owing to the illness of three of our other employees and the impossibility of finding men to fill their places. We are glad to say that the difficulty has finally been adjusted, however, so that we can guarantee prompt service in the future. We assure you that we are extremely sorry for the inconvenience we have caused you, for we greatly value your patronage.

Yours truly,

CARTER & ROBERTS,
By J. W. R.

VI

THE ROCKINGHAM,
ROCHESTER, N.Y.,
May 14, 1907.

DEAR PROFESSOR REED,

I have been ill at home for the last three days, and I am sorry to say that Dr. Arthur refuses to allow me to attend any classes this week, so that I cannot read the report which I was to present on Friday. I have prepared my paper, nevertheless, and am now sending it to you by Miss Wilson, who has consented to read it in my place, if you are willing.

Sincerely yours,

FLORENCE R. EVANS.

PROFESSOR JAMES RICE REED,
Dillingham Institute,
Rochester, N.Y.

VII

Thursday, May 2.

Dear Miss Hill,

This theme which I am leaving on your desk is the one which was due on April 25th. You were kind enough, you remember, to allow me to hand it in one week late because I broke my glasses.

Sincerely yours,

Olive Richardson.

Miss Mary Hill.

VIII

80 Beacon Terrace,
Brighton, N.Y.,
April 24, 1907.

My dear John,

I have just read in the morning "Herald" the good news of your appointment as valedictorian for your class. It was particularly gratifying to know that you were the choice of your classmates as well as of your teachers, and that the vote was in both cases unanimous. Your success has made all your friends very proud of you, and I take this early opportunity to offer you my congratulations and best wishes.

Cordially yours,

Mary Lee.

IX

Clover Hill School,
March 30, 1907.

Dear Johnson,

Please accept my heartiest congratulations on your election as class president. Of course, since I was the rival candidate, I felt a sportsmanlike determination to make a good fight, but I am sure you will not harbor against me anything I may have said hastily in the heat of the conflict. You are the best man in the class for the position, old fellow, and you will have no more loyal supporter, I promise you, than your late antagonist.

Always cordially yours,

Rupert S. Austin.

X

East India House,
May 21, 1819.

Dear Rickman,

The gentleman who will present this letter holds a situation of considerable importance in the East India House, and is my very good friend. He is desirous of knowing whether it is too late to amend a mere error in figures which he has just discovered in an account made out by him and laid before the House yesterday. He will best explain to you what he means, and I am sure you will help him to the best of your power. Phillips is too ill for me to think of applying to him.

Why did we not see you last night?

Yours truly,
Charles Lamb.

XI

Olney,
Jan. 1, 1771.

Dear Joseph,

You will receive two parcels of venison, a haunch and a shoulder. The first was intended for you, the other comes to you by mistake. Some hours after the basket was sent to the wagon, we discovered that the shoulder had been packed up instead of the haunch. All imaginable endeavors were made to recover it, but without success; the wagon could not be unloaded again, and it was impossible otherwise to get at it. You may therefore thank a blundering servant for a venison pasty, which, if she had minded her business better, would have been eaten at Olney.

Yours, my dear friend,
Wm. Cowper.

XII

Greenpoint, near the Red Fork of the Arkansas,
Oct. 18, 1832.

My dear Sister,

I wrote to you when about to start from Fort Gibson, under an escort, to join the exploring party of rangers. We came up with them, in the course of three or four days, on the banks of the Arkansas. The whole troop crossed that river the day before yesterday, some on rafts, some fording. Our own immediate

party have a couple of half-breed Indians as servants, who understand the Indian customs. They constructed a kind of boat or raft out of a buffalo skin, on which Mr. Ellsworth and myself crossed at several times, on the top of about a hundredweight of luggage — an odd way of crossing a river a quarter of a mile wide.

We are now on the borders of the Pawnee country, a region untraversed by white men, except by solitary trappers. We are leading a wild life, depending upon game, such as deer, elk, bear, for food, encamping on the borders of brooks, and sleeping in the open air under trees, with outposts stationed to guard us against any surprise by the Indians.

We shall probably be three weeks longer on this tour. Two or three days bring us into the buffalo range, where we shall have grand sport hunting. We shall also be in the range of wild horses.

I send this letter by a party of the men who have to return to escort two or three sick men, who have the measles and fevers. The rest of the camp is well, and our own party in high spirits. I was never in finer health, or enjoyed myself more, and the idea of exploring a wild country of this magnificent character is very exciting.

I write at the moment of marching. The horses are all saddled, and the bugle sounds for mounting. God bless you. I shall not have another opportunity of writing until I return to the garrison of Fort Gibson. We are far beyond any civilized habitation, or even an Indian village.

Love to all. Your brother,

WASHINGTON IRVING.[1]

EXERCISES IN LETTER-WRITING

BUSINESS LETTERS

1. John Smith is the owner of a canal boat which runs on the Erie Canal. Write to him in order to make arrangements to use his boat for a picnic.

2. Write to John S. Egremont, a noted lecturer, asking him on what terms he would speak in your town for the benefit of the High School.

[1] From "Life and Letters of Washington Irving," by Pierre M. Irving (New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons).

3. Write to the Secretary of Yale University, asking him to send you an announcement of the requirements for admission.

4. John L. Anderson, of your city, contemplates buying a small house in the country for the use of his family in the summer. He advertises for such a house, stating his requirements. The house must be within three miles of a railroad station.

Answer the advertisement, describing the house you have for sale.

Assume that you are a dealer in real estate. Answer the advertisement, asking further questions and offering to assist Mr. Anderson in finding a house.

Write Mr. Anderson's reply to the first letter.

Write Mr. Anderson's reply to the second letter.

5. You wish to become a bookkeeper. Write to a friend who has had long experience, and ask his advice as to your course of study and the best method of preparing for your work.

6. Write to the principal of some high school in your state, proposing a debate between his school and your own. Suggest the conditions under which the debate should be conducted; name two or three subjects, and invite further correspondence.

7. A gentleman whom you know wishes to buy a dog. Write to him, offering to sell him your dog. Describe the dog's characteristics.

8. Write to the congressman of your district, asking him how you can become eligible for examination for West Point, or for the Naval Academy at Annapolis.

9. Write to the proprietor of a summer hotel at Atlantic City for a descriptive circular giving full information about the hotel and its environment.

10. You wish to buy a piano. Write to the proprietors of the salesrooms in your town, asking for descriptions of the best pianos, with prices.

Business Transactions

A **business transaction** may require much correspondence before its details are settled. There are usually preliminary inquiries, definite propositions, an agreement, and the performance of the agreement. All these items require letter-writing.

I

STEAM CARPET CLEANING, 3 cents a yard. Carpets laid, 3 cents a yard. Tel. 305–2. THE N. J. EVANS COMPANY, Norfolk, cor. Castle St.

1. Write to the company, asking them to send for your carpet, which is to be cleaned, repaired, and laid.
2. Write a reply to No. 1.
3. Make out a bill for the work.
4. Write a letter enclosing a check in payment, and saying that the work has been well and promptly done.[1]

II

PASSAGE TICKETS to and from EUROPE via Allan, American, Anchor, Cunard, Dominion, White Star, and Scandinavian-American Lines. All lines of rail and ocean travel represented. Tickets to and from all parts of the world. T. L. Smith & Co., 45 Elliot St. Telephone, Main 656.

Conduct the following correspondence, referring to the advertisement of the steamship agents.

1. Write to the firm, asking for descriptive circulars. Mention the paper in which you first saw the advertisement.
2. Write the reply of T. L. Smith & Co.
3. After examining the circulars, you decide to take passage for a party of six by the Dominion Line. Write, asking for a plan of the ships of this line, with dates of sailing and definite terms.
4. Write T. L. Smith & Co.'s reply to the inquiries in No. 3. Remark that a plan is enclosed.
5. Write to engage passage for your party on a certain ship at a certain date. Indicate selected staterooms in order of choice, and enclose check for the preliminary deposit required.
6. The ship which you have selected is disabled. The company substitutes another and sends a printed letter to all persons who have taken passage. Write the letter.

[1] For business forms, see pp. 466–468.

7. Write a letter to the company, asking if it is possible to exchange your tickets, in order to secure passage in one of the ships sailing either earlier or later.

8. Write a reply to No. 7, arranging for the exchange.

9. Write to the company, closing the transaction.

Friendly Letters [1]

1. Imagine yourself at Manila. Write to your cousin at home. Tell her how the climate differs from that of your own city; describe the appearance of Manila and the habits of the people, and add anything else which may be of interest.

2. Write from Paris to your friend Elbert Smith in Buffalo, N.Y. Describe some of the interesting places that you have visited.

3. You are snow-bound on your way from Albany to Cleveland, and delayed for fifteen hours. Telegraph to your friends in Cleveland, assuring them of your safety and explaining the delay.

After your arrival in Cleveland, write a letter home and describe your journey.

4. Your friend Alfred Maybury writes to ask you about a camping trip you made last summer to a lake near your home. Answer him, explaining what he will need in the way of outfit, and giving him any other information that is likely to be useful to him in preparing for a similar trip.

5. One of your classmates has been ill in a hospital, but is convalescent. Write to him, telling what has happened at school during his illness. You will of course tell him that he has been missed, and that you are glad to hear of his recovery.

6. Write a reply to No. 5, describing life in the hospital and asking questions about the progress of the class.

7. You have sailed from Liverpool on a steamship bound for Boston. The propeller is broken, and after two days' drifting your ship is discovered by an ocean liner and is towed back to Queenstown. Send a message by cable, informing your friends that you are safe.

Write a letter home, recounting your experiences.

[1] Much of the material in the Exercises in Narration (pp. 78–88) and Description (pp. 137–144) may be utilized for letter-writing.

8. Your friend Elmer Eaton is a freshman at college. He writes to you, describing the college and outlining some of his experiences there. Reproduce the letter.

9. Your cousin Ethel Wright sends you a letter from the school at which she is studying. She informs you that her friend and classmate Miss Jane Merriam is to spend a week in your city, and asks you to call on Miss Merriam. Reproduce the letter.

10. Write to your friend Geoffrey Nelson, who lives in Columbus, Ohio, asking him to spend his summer vacation with you. Tell him what you will do to make his visit agreeable. Your father and mother join in the invitation.

11. Write a journal letter, recounting briefly the incidents of a journey from Philadelphia to San Francisco. It may be written to your mother, to your younger sister, or to a friend.

12. Write a letter to your family from a country town in which you have just found employment. Describe both the town and the work which you are doing.

13. You have been reading a book which a friend had given you. Write to the friend, expressing your opinion of the book, and commenting upon the characters and plot.

14. Write a letter to a young friend who contemplates leaving school before graduation, without apparent reason. Urge him to complete the course and explain the resulting advantages.

15. Write a description of a day's outing to a friend who had intended to join the party, but was accidentally detained.

16. Find in the Library good examples of descriptive letters. Select one to present to the class, and point out the features which make the letter interesting and readable.

17. Compose two letters: the first from a son to his mother, describing his first experiences, away from home, at a boarding-school; the second replying to the first, and presenting the mother's point of view.

18. Write a letter in which, in the narrative form, you explain to your friend the manufacture of boots and shoes.

19. Write a letter which describes an old mill to a man who intends to purchase it for investment.

20. Write another letter to a friend describing the mill as you first saw it on a morning in early spring.

INVITATIONS AND REPLIES

Invitations and **replies** are either formal or informal. The reply should accord in style with the invitation.

An **informal invitation** is written like any other familiar letter, except that the heading is often less exact in designating the date and place. Sometimes the place is omitted altogether.

A **formal invitation** is always in the third person, which should be maintained throughout. It has no heading, no salutation, and no "Yours truly" (or the like) at the end. It is also unsigned, for the writer's name appears in the body of the invitation.

In both formal and informal invitations the address of the sender and the date may be written below and at the left. The day of the month is often written out in full, and the year may be omitted.

A formal invitation may be arranged in lines of different lengths, as in the following example. This is always the practice when it is engraved.

Mr. and Mrs. Egbert
request the pleasure of
Mr. Johnston's
company at dinner
on Wednesday, January fourteenth,
at seven o'clock.
43 Grantham Street.

A formal **reply** is also in the third person, and follows the style of the invitation in other respects. It need not, however, be "displayed" like an engraved invitation.

A reply, whether formal or informal, should repeat the date and hour mentioned in the invitation, to prevent

mistake.[1] It should in every case be sent at once, that the host or hostess may know how many guests to expect.

Specimens of invitations and replies, formal and informal, are the following: —

[A formal invitation.]

Mrs. John T. Lawrence requests the pleasure of Miss Ainslee's company at dinner on Wednesday, February twenty-seventh, at seven o'clock.

239 Main Street.

[A formal reply, accepting.]

Miss Ainslee accepts with pleasure Mrs. Lawrence's kind invitation for Wednesday evening, February twenty-seventh, at seven o'clock.

13 Chestnut Terrace,
February twenty-fourth.

[A formal reply, declining.]

Miss Ainslee regrets that a previous engagement prevents her accepting Mrs. Lawrence's kind invitation for Wednesday evening.

13 Chestnut Terrace,
February twenty-fourth.

[Informal invitations and replies.]

5 Clifton Road,
Thursday morning.

Dear Miss Adams,

May I have the pleasure of taking you and your sister to drive in the Park this afternoon? The day is a beautiful one, and I do not like to have you return to the West without seeing the prettiest thing our town has to show.

If it is convenient for you, I will call at three o'clock. The bearer will wait for your reply.

Most cordially yours,
Charlotte L. Fanshaw.

[1] In declining an invitation, however, it is not necessary to mention the hour.

My dear Mrs. Richards,

Will you and Mr. Richards give us the pleasure of your company at dinner on Friday, August tenth, at seven o'clock?

Sincerely yours,

Mary Sanderson.

9 Hilton Place,
August third.

My dear Mrs. Sanderson,

It will give us great pleasure to dine with you on Friday, the tenth, at seven o'clock.

Sincerely yours,

Helen Richards.

10 Alton Street,
August fourth.

My dear Mrs. Sanderson,

I am very sorry that a previous engagement will deprive us of the pleasure of dining with you on Friday.

Sincerely yours,

Helen Richards.

10 Alton Street,
August fourth.

SUPPLEMENTARY EXERCISES

SUBJECTS FOR COMPOSITIONS

(1) A Page in a Diary. (2) A Day at the Lake. (3) A Half-Holiday in May. (4) My First Impressions of the High School. (5) The Character of Sir Galahad. (6) A Country Road in Spring. (7) Longfellow's "Evangeline." (8) The Playthings of a Four-year-old. (9) How we Made our Camp. (10) How to Catch Trout. (11) The Oldest House in our Town. (12) The Destruction of St. Pierre. (13) A Bit of Human Nature. (14) Theatres in Shakspere's Time. (15) "Snow-Bound." (16) Tom Tulliver. (17) Uriah Heep. (18) The Book I Like Best. (19) A Visit to the Farm. (20) How Sugar is Made. (21) Life on a Ranch. (22) A Winter Evening. (23) Kate's Contribution to the Housekeeping. (24) How Robert Paid the Mortgage. (25) How a Boy may Earn his Living. (26) Three Good Reasons for Studying Grammar. (27) From the Oak Tree to the Library Table. (28) The Trees of our Village. (29) The Trees in the Hill Pasture. (30) Learning to Sail a Boat. (31) What the Fisherman Told me. (32) The Long Summer Vacation. (33) Why I Wish to go to College. (34) Hawthorne's Descriptions of Nature. (35) The Story of a Child. (36) An American Hero. (37) The Life of an Engineer. (38) The Work which is Worth Doing. (39) How Rapid Transit Affects City Life. (40) The Advantages of Travel.

The following subjects are to be assigned in advance. The students should prepare for the exercise by reading, observation, or study. The writing should be done in the class and should occupy

not more than five minutes. All the students should write upon the same subject, and the compositions should be exchanged and criticised during the same recitation period.

The composition may consist of one paragraph or of several, according to the plan of the writer.

1. What is your opinion of Maggie Tulliver?
2. Should students give any time to light reading?
3. Do you like the poems of Robert Burns, and why?
4. Which attracts you more, country life or city life?
5. Give reasons for your choice of subjects of study.
6. What kind of occupation seems most attractive to you? Give your reasons.
7. Which is of greater importance to the commonwealth, farming or manufacturing?
8. Which seems to you the higher occupation, trade or teaching?
9. What in your opinion are the essentials of good manners?
10. Give reasons for maintaining quiet demeanor and a dignified manner in public.
11. Explain one of the common campaign phrases of the day.
12. Give at least five reasons for taking regular and varied out-of-door exercise.
13. What are your chief duties to your neighbor?
14. What do you understand by a *prig?* a *fop?* an *exquisite?* an *epicure?*

The following subjects involve narration or description, or both. They are intended to be suggestive merely.

(1) My Stroll on the Beach. (2) My First Hour in a Sailboat. (3) Our Valley at Sunset. (4) Looking Down from the Mountain. (5) The Harbor in a Fog. (6) Lost on the Prairie. (7) In Pursuit of Three Buttons and a Spool of Silk. (8) The Good Comrade in School. (9) How I Learned to Skate. (10) A Winter Morning after the Rain. (11) The Longest Way Round is the Shortest Way Home. (12) How I Wrote my First Composition. (13) How Jack Earned his Class Pin. (14) How I took Care of my Garden. (15) The Daily Mail at Smithville.

NARRATION

1. Bring to the class some story in which the introductory paragraph contains a description.

2. Carefully enumerate the items which are included in the introduction to "The Battle of Bannockburn" (pp. 22–23). Show how the movement of the story might have been hindered by the omission of any of these items. How does this introduction differ from those which you have studied in previous exercises?

3. Find in magazines or newspapers short stories or anecdotes introduced by a brief paragraph or a single sentence: for example, "The following story appeared in the 'Springfield Republican' at the time of the spring floods," or "Thomas Hughes relates this story of Dr. Arnold."

4. Turn to Longfellow's poems, and study his introduction to the "Song of Hiawatha," "Evangeline," "Tales of a Wayside Inn," and "The Courtship of Miles Standish." How does the last differ from the first? Point out the essential features of each introduction, showing how they help the reader.

5. Recite an anecdote which needs to be formally introduced. Invent two or three appropriate introductions, and point out the advantage of each.

6. Write the outline of a brief anecdote, noting (1) the purpose and details of the introduction, and (2) the items to be included in the story.

7. Tell the story of Pandora. You will find the material in Hawthorne's "Wonder-Book."

8. Report some story of a child. Let the story include a dialogue.

9. Write an imaginary story of adventure.

10. The story of a prairie fire. — A twelve-year-old girl is left at home to care for her little sister and baby brother. The sister is at play in the yard, the baby is asleep. The girl looks from the window and sees fire on the distant prairie. She has heard stories of the havoc wrought by prairie fires; wraps both children

in wet quilts; mounts a horse with them; urges him forward; races with the fire; and at last reaches the creek and is safe.

11. Tell the story of a practical joke. (1) Let the one who played the joke tell it, with great delight in his achievement. (2) Let the one upon whom the joke was played recite it, showing the serious consequences of the trick. (3) Let some one who has heard both sides tell the story, showing real understanding and appreciation of both sides. (4) Let some critic tell the story, blaming the joker and sympathizing with the person who suffered from the trick.

12. Jane Grant lives on a farm in Ashfield, Ohio. She has "finished school," according to her neighbors; but she desires to go to college. Her mother sympathizes, but does not believe the necessary money can be raised. Her father thinks Jane knows enough already. Her aunt Martha objects vigorously. Her older sister suggests a plan by which Jane can pay her way. Tell the story (1) from Jane's point of view; (2) as her mother might have written it in a letter to an old friend; (3) as Jane's father might have told it; (4) from the aunt's point of view; (5) as Jane's sister might have written it in her diary.

13. Tell the story of the combat in Matthew Arnold's "Sohrab and Rustum." Let your introduction explain the circumstances so that the incident shall be intelligible.

14. Select an incident from Thackeray's "Virginians" and tell it in your own words.

15. Give a brief account of the plot of "The Merchant of Venice"; of "As You Like It."

16. Write from memory the story of one of the following selections from Hawthorne's "Twice-Told Tales": — "David Swan," "Old Esther Dudley," "Mr. Higginbotham's Catastrophe," "Howe's Masquerade," "Lady Eleanore's Mantle," "The Minister's Black Veil."

17. How did Robinson Crusoe become acquainted with his man Friday? Tell the story, with a brief introduction explaining how Robinson came to be on a desert island.

18. Write a story suggested by some incident mentioned in the Sir Roger de Coverley papers.

DESCRIPTION

1. Your uncle has given you a pony and cart. Write a letter to him, thanking him for his gift, and expressing your appreciation of it. Write a letter to a friend, describing (1) the gift; (2) your first drive.

2. Describe a day on a canal boat.

3. Report a visit to a hayfield, where the men were making hay. Do not forget the landscape, the weather, the sweet odors of the field, the appearance of the passers-by.

4. Repeat Exercise 3, imagining yourself employed in "raking after the cart."

5. Describe a pasture in the country, — situation, character of the ground, trees, bushes, boulders, etc. Be careful not to make a mere inventory.

6. Write a description of your back yard as you see it from the window.

7. Describe your library as seen from the street.

8. An abandoned street car, in the outskirts of the city, is set in a field and used by an eccentric old man as a house. Describe the exterior; the interior.

Describe the old man who lives in the car.

9. A fire breaks out in your hotel in the night. You are accidentally locked in your room. You hear — (what?). You smell — (what?). You see — (what?). You try to escape — (how?). You are rescued — (how?).

Write a full description, maintaining your point of view.

10. Describe a quarry. If possible, visit a quarry, and make notes for your outline. Tell what you see (1) from above; (2) from below.

Be prepared to report your visit to the class, using your notes as a guide. Be careful to arrange the items of your description in proper order.

11. Describe the cover of some magazine.

12. Describe the interior of a hall or church, as if you were standing at the entrance (1) when the hall is full; (2) when it is empty.

13. Describe some old-fashioned costume that you have seen.

14. "When school is dismissed." Describe the scene. Let it be at midday, in June.

Write your description from the teacher's point of view; again, from the pupil's side; once more, as if you were a passer-by.

15. Write a brief description of one of the characters in the following list: — Silas Marner; Florence Dombey; Captain Cuttle; Benjamin Franklin; Lafayette; Florence Nightingale; Sir Roger de Coverley; Enoch Arden; Ellen Douglas; Rebecca; Ivanhoe; the Ancient Mariner.

16. Write a description in the present tense. Imagine that you are approaching the scene described. Introduce new details as you come nearer.

17. Write two paragraphs, describing your village, town, or city, as you imagine it would appear to the occupants of a balloon ascending from the common, or the central square.

18. Write a description in which you suggest sounds and odors as well as the scene which you describe.

19. You climb a hill in order to observe the sunrise. The scene may be in the city or the country, in October or in June. Write the description.

20. Describe a statue with which you are familiar. If there is none in your immediate neighborhood, write the description from a picture.

21. Describe two objects by contrasting them. Select two which are different and yet comparable. Prepare your composition for reading in the class.

22. Test one of the descriptions in this book by means of the following questions: — Is the description clear? Is it accurate? Is it interesting? Does it present a related whole? What is the principal element of the description? What are the subordinate details? What is the general impression made by the description?

EXPOSITION AND EXPOSITORY DESCRIPTION

1. Describe a bridge in your vicinity.
   a. Tell where it is.
   b. Write a clear description of its appearance. Speak of the material, design, and general plan of structure. Use such technical terms as are necessary to make your meaning clear. These may be learned from conversation with bridge builders or from reading.

2. Write a description of a schoolhouse with which you are familiar. Tell where it is situated, and describe its appearance. Tell what you know of the school itself, the neighborhood it represents, the character of the pupils, and add any interesting and pertinent facts which occur to you as you write.

3. You have found a wild flower which you have never seen before. Write to a friend who has some knowledge of plants, and describe the flower, asking its name. Use such botanical terms as are necessary to make your meaning clear.

4. Write about fences.
   a. Use of fences; how the use determines the kind.
   b. Kinds (with description of particular sorts which you have seen, — the New England stone wall, the Virginia rail fence, stump fences, barbed-wire fences, etc.).
   c. Disappearance of the fence in cities.

5. Describe a visit to some manufactory. In preparing your description use the following outline: —
   a. Introductory sentence, including location, name, and character of the manufactory.
   b. The building from without.
   c. The departments, or rooms, with the work done in each. These should follow the order of the manufacture.
   d. The finished product.
   e. The distribution of the manufactured articles.

6. Describe a blue jay, a crow, an owl, a robin, a duck, or a parrot. In preparing your description use the following outline: —

a. Tell where the bird may be found (its habitat).

b. Describe its appearance, — color, size, form, etc.

c. Describe its habits.

d. Add items of interest which occur to you.

7. Study this exposition of Thoreau's. What fact does he explain? How does he explain it? How did he learn this truth? What is the force of the concluding sentence?

In all the pines, a very thin membrane, in appearance much like an insect's wing, grows over and around the seed, and independent of it, while the latter is being developed within its base. . . . In other words, a beautiful thin sack is woven around the seed, with a handle to it such as the wind can take hold of, and it is then committed to the wind, expressly that it may transport the seed and extend the range of its species; and this it does as effectually as when seeds are sent by mail in a different kind of sack from the patent office.

8. Explain some fact which you have observed in nature or learned from books. Make your explanation accurate, as well as clear, no matter how trivial the item may seem to you.

9. Select one of the following topics for an explanatory description, as in Exercise 1, and write a paragraph on the subject: —

The buds of the horse-chestnut tree.	Mullein.
The second year of an onion's life.	An aquatic plant.
Clover and the bees.	An oriole's nest.

10. Describe a suit of armor, in reply to a child who asks you about it.

11. Imagine a person who has never seen a railroad. Explain to him the general plan of construction.

12. Bring to the class a short, clear, and definite exposition which you have found either in a text-book or in a magazine. Read it aloud, asking your classmates to discuss the exposition, and, particularly, to ask questions about such parts as are not entirely clear.

Rewrite the exposition from memory.

13. Make definitions of familiar objects, as a step in the process of exposition. Observe the difference between an exact and logical definition and a general description. Define the objects or ideas mentioned in the list below.

angle	cube	triangle
scalene triangle	fraction	interest
commission	denominator	divisor
subtrahend	prime number	petiole
legume	pistil	stamen
mushroom	fern	spoon
knife	pitcher	goblet
carpet	machine	engine
engineer	machinist	silversmith
merchant	commerce	warship

14. What is an ocean current? Use the Gulf Stream as an example and describe clearly, using drawings.

15. Explain the formation of a delta, as in the Nile or the Mississippi River.

16. What is meant by the *solar spectrum?* Explain by a diagram and a written descriptive definition.

17. Explain the alphabet used in telegraphy, and show how a message is sent.

18. Describe Franklin's experiment with the kite.

19. Why does a chestnut snap and burst while roasting?

20. Turn to a text-book in physiology. Read the chapter which explains the circulatory system. Make a careful outline of the subject, as the author presents it, and be prepared to recite orally from your outline.

21. Turn to a good physical geography, or an encyclopedia, and find a brief and clear exposition. Make an outline of the exposition, and report it to the class.

22. Describe a railroad switch. Explain (1) its use; (2) its appearance; (3) its operation; (4) possible consequences of a misplaced switch, with actual example.

23. Write about lamps. (1) Definition of your subject; (2) how lamps are constructed; (3) how lamps should be cared for; (4) lamps in former days.

24. What is a savings bank? How is such a bank established in your state? How is an account opened? How is it "kept" or recorded? How is money deposited? How is interest drawn? What rate per cent is paid? If interest is not withdrawn, what becomes of it? Should a boy or girl open an account at a savings bank? Why, or why not?

25. Define a suction pump; describe it; explain its working; draw a diagram of the pump.

Compare definition, description, exposition, and diagram, showing what may be learned from each, and the order in which you receive the ideas in each case.

26. Life on a cattle ranch; on a wheat ranch; on a fruit farm; on a small New England farm; on a plantation in the South; in a fishing village; in a mining camp.

27. When Washington was a boy: an exposition of Virginian life in colonial days.

28. Prepare an outline for an explanatory description of a battle. Announce your plan, in introductory sentence. Thus, —

"You must first know the objective point of both armies, which was . . . Then you must understand the position of the enemy, which was . . . Then I can explain our movement and its result."

29. Make an announcement of your plan for explaining the manufacture of steel rails.

To the Teacher. — These exercises should be extended and varied until the pupils realize the necessity of clear and definite arrangement. By a discussion of some familiar subject (the system of the school; the arrangement of the schoolhouse; the working of some simple machine whose parts may be seen at a single glance of the eye but must be treated consecutively in an explanation) the pupils may be taught to observe the difference between the natural order of experience and the systematic order required in good explanation. When this principle is once grasped, progress is easy.

PARAGRAPHS

1. Study the second and third paragraphs in Miss Mitford's description (pp. 94–95). Make (or find) a topic sentence for each. Observe the introductory sentences. Note how the paragraph presents in detail the subject which is introduced by the opening sentences.

2. Write a paragraph describing a familiar scene in autumn or spring. Let the paragraph present the details of the scene.

3. Write a paragraph describing a person. Use the plan followed in Exercise 2.

4. Write one or more paragraphs on the subject "The borrower is servant to the lender." Let your first paragraph consist of an introduction, and in those that follow give instances or examples of the truth under discussion.

5. Find in some text-book three paragraphs constructed as in Exercise 4.

6. Write three paragraphs giving instances or examples to explain the following subject: "The blusterer is not always a hero, neither is the modest man necessarily a craven."

7. Write on one of the following subjects, making each paragraph explain an effect of the cause stated in the introductory sentence: — (1) The Volcano as a Neighbor. (2) Too much Help may Hinder. (3) A Midsummer Drought. (4) The Effects of Rapid Transit. (5) The Invention of the Telephone. (6) Wireless Telegraphy.

8. Describe a pomegranate, or a persimmon, or a fig, by comparing it to something like itself, and contrasting it with something different. Outline your paragraphs, to show their plan.

9. Describe some character in history or fiction by telling what he is not.

10. Write three paragraphs, contrasting the dust and din of the city with the quiet and freshness of the country.

11. Analyze the last paragraph in "The Old Boat" (p. 93). What is the plan on which it is constructed?

12. Find in the extracts quoted in this book examples of paragraphs (1) which give examples; (2) which compare or contrast subjects; (3) which show the effect of a cause; (4) which present details; (5) which explain by showing what a thing is not.

13. Write a paragraph, attempting to prove something by denying or disproving the contrary. Your proposition may be "Regular periods of rest are essential to health," or "Washington was an able statesman as well as a devoted patriot."

14. Show that the paragraphs in "The Valley of the Floss" (p. 99) are good examples of unity.

15. Point out the means by which transition is secured in paragraphs 1 and 2 of the "Australian Kangaroo Hunt" (p. 147).

16. Write a paragraph composed of related questions, as on page 152.

17. Make topic sentences for the paragraphs necessary in writing one of the compositions outlined on pages 200–202.

18. Show how the outlines on pages 200–201 naturally suggest division into paragraphs.

19. Make a tabular view of one of the subjects on page 201 or page 203, supplying subordinate details.

20. Review one of the briefs on pages 249–259, noting the natural division into paragraphs.

21. Construct a paragraph on the principle of the climax.

22. Write an argument on one of the subjects named on page 370. Test its structure by asking the following questions:— (1) Are the paragraphs well proportioned? (2) Do they follow a natural or logical sequence? (3) Is each paragraph a unit? (4) Are the transitions smooth and easy? (5) Are the statements clear? cogent? (6) Is the emphasis well placed? (7) Are the interrelations of the paragraphs perfectly clear?

23. Prepare a brief for an essay on "The Advantages of Going Afoot." Attend to the structure and arrangement of paragraphs.

24. Read a short essay from some standard author. Report the essay in outline to the class. What does the essay show you about paragraph structure?

STUDY OF THE DICTIONARY

1. Learn all that the Dictionary can tell you about the following words, and report to the class: — dredge, drift, drop, droop, elbow, element, emeritus, emperor, encore, enunciate, escalade, eschew, estuary, euphuism, euphemism, example, extenuate, fall, fast, feint, feudal, find, firm, frame, grate, grocer, gunwale, haul, hansom, heirloom, herald, comfort, thorough, favor, liberal, citizen, kingdom, detach, spasmodic, countenance, pheasant, shrewd, recipe, nostrum, cadence, category, oriental, plight, quiz, type, weigh.

2. Prepare to answer the following questions in an oral report to the class: —

What does the Dictionary teach you about the pronunciation of words? Where is this information contained?

What signs are used to indicate pronunciation? Have you mastered the diacritical marks? Can you pronounce a word from its diacritical markings?

Select from the Dictionary a number of words with their diacritical marks, to be written on the blackboard as a test for the other pupils.

3. How does the Dictionary indicate syllabication and accent of words? Illustrate for the class.

4. How does the Dictionary indicate the part of speech to which a word belongs? Illustrate for the class.

If a word belongs to more than one part of speech, how are the definitions arranged? Illustrate.

5. What does the Dictionary show concerning the derivation of words? Explain the abbreviations used to indicate derivation.

6. When several meanings of a single word are given in the Dictionary, which definition should you select?

7. What is the purpose of the quotations and examples which are given in an unabridged dictionary? Give examples to show their use.

8. Which part of the verb is included in the dictionary list? Does the Dictionary help you to spell other forms of the verb?

WORDS AND SENTENCES

1. Read "Rumpelstiltskin" (pp. 14–17), in order to answer the following questions: — (1) What words do you find in the story which do not appear in your ordinary conversation? Make a list of these words; then use each one carefully in a sentence. (2) Select ten words for which you can substitute longer or less familiar synonyms. Try the effect of each synonym in the sentence. (3) For what audience is this story intended? Show that the author has adapted his story to his audience.

2. Use in sentences of your own the following words from "Moses and the Green Spectacles" (pp. 17–20): — intention, persuaded, prevail, discreet, prudence, intrust, commission, waistcoat, bawling, congratulate, commendation, importing, assented, warrant, passion, blockhead, sharper, pretense.

3. Explain the use of the following words which occur in "Moses and the Green Spectacles": — higgles, deal, paces, undertook, by the by, shagreen, murrain, trumpery, prowling.

4. Study "Moses and the Green Spectacles," observing the specific words and phrases which enter into the descriptions. Write the words in lists, showing which are nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, etc. What effect is produced by the use of so many specific words?

5. Read "Lochinvar" (pp. 20–21), picking out the figurative expressions in the poem.

6. Study the adjectives in Grey's "Australian Superstition" (pp. 27–29). Write them in a list. In the class, be prepared, with the other pupils, to use each word in turn in an impromptu sentence. The exercise should test your command of this vocabulary.

7. Make a list of the nouns in "Australian Superstition," using them as in the previous exercise.

8. Study the adjectives used in "The Valley of the Floss" (p. 99). Weigh the meaning of each adjective, as you read, and see what it contributes to your thought of the scene. Which

words present objects to your eye merely? Which words stir some feeling? Which are a contribution from the author's feeling or imagination? Are these words plain or figurative?

9. Use in written sentences of your own these words from Miss Mitford's description (pp. 94–95), consulting the Dictionary when you are in doubt, and reporting what you learn about the unfamiliar words: — avenue, arching, perspective, cathedral, incrusted, congelation, hoar-frost, defined, uniform, various, filling, satiating, thrilling, awfulness, intense, magnificent, eminence, abruptly, furze, broom, luxuriant, hedgerows, thyme, holly, pendent, bramble, pollard, rime, tracery, hip, haw, runlet, trickles, transparent, fantastic, scudding, gorgeous, tropical, mistrust, suspiciously, glutton, fine.

10. Distinguish between the use of *pretense* and *pretext; proposal* and *proposition; motto* and *maxim; quote* and *plagiarize; claim* and *assert; fiction* and *myth; treachery* and *treason; courage* and *fortitude; economy* and *parsimony; modest* and *bashful; coax* and *convince.* Use each pair of words in a sentence.

11. Study the words and phrases which are used in each contrast indicated in the following selection: —

To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace. — Ecclesiastes, iii, 1–8.

12. Read a paragraph from a standard author. Make a list of the words occurring in the paragraph which you do not ordinarily use in conversation. Turn to the Dictionary and study the definition of each word. Then compose sentences in which the words are correctly used.

13. Select a paragraph to read to the class. After the paragraph has been read, ask different members of the class to use selected words in sentences.

14. Let each member of the class select ten words from a well-known book or from a magazine article designated by the teacher. These words are to be brought to the class. As each word is read, a pupil may be asked to use it at once in an appropriate sentence. The words which cannot be promptly and correctly used should be written on the board for study by the class.

15. See how many appropriate adjectives you can use in describing certain familiar objects or scenes: as, — an oak tree, a procession, a family at home, the school yard at recess, market day, a Fourth-of-July procession, etc.

16. Select a paragraph from some standard author and carefully study the words used in the paragraph. Decide whether they are appropriate or otherwise. See how they are used, and state the thought in another way, using other words.

17. Make a list of the names of twenty-five common things (as, pieces of furniture, utensils, tools, etc.), and, with the help of the Dictionary, find the derivation of the names in your list. See from what language they have come into English, and report what you have learned to the class.

18. Bring to the class a newspaper paragraph which seems to you carelessly written, and suggest words or phrases which will better express the thought of the paragraph.

19. Substitute general for specific words in "The Story of a Fire" (pp. 13–14), and observe the effect.

20. Use the following general and specific words in sentences, and compare the effect of the contrasted terms: — went, sped; tree, plum tree; child, barefoot boy; man, farmer; house, cottage; city, Chicago; sound, hum, whirr, shriek, whistle; insect, butterfly, bee, mosquito.

21. Use the following words in sentences which illustrate the difference in the meaning of the words: — (1) abbreviate, abridge, contract; (2) prohibit, abolish, annihilate; (3) arbitrary, despotic,

tyrannical; (4) forgive, pardon, acquit; (5) accident, chance, misfortune; (6) companion, comrade, friend; (7) luxurious, luxuriant; (8) imperious, imperative; (9) near, neighboring, next; (10) adorn, garnish, decorate; (11) appearance, demeanor, mien; (12) equal, equivalent; (13) foreign, alien; (14) mitigate, alleviate; (15) niggardly, avaricious, covetous; (16) awful, disagreeable; (17) annoying, horrid; (18) beach, coast, brink, strand; (19) pretty, beautiful, handsome, picturesque; (20) bitter, pungent, caustic; (21) noisy, boisterous, turbulent; (22) sincere, transparent, aboveboard; (23) cause, occasion; (24) select, prefer; (25) class, clique, coterie, set; (26) deception, craft, hypocrisy.

22. Read Sir John Lubbock's exposition of a regular flower (p. 151). Make a list of all the technical words which occur in the selection. Study the use of each word. See if you can substitute more familiar words or phrases without loss of clearness or definiteness.

23. Make a list of the technical words used in Professor Goss's comparison of a stationary and a locomotive engine (pp. 154–6). Bring your list to the class, to compare with the lists made by other pupils. Discuss the selection, considering the meaning and use of each technical word in its place.

24. Describe a boat race, using technical terms.

Rewrite your description, omitting all words which would be unintelligible to a person who knows very little of the construction and management of boats.

Read both descriptions in the class, for comparison and criticism.

25. Explain the meaning of the following words used in the description of buildings: — colonnade, fresco, dome, façade, arch, court, peristyle, vault, cloister, porch, tower, column, rotunda, spire, arcade, cornice, pediment, cupola, portico, turret.

26. Define the technical words which are italicized in the following sentences: —

Another remarkable result of the *migration* of the *doldrum belt* is seen in the change in the direction of the *trade winds* when they cross the

geographic equator on the way to the *heat equator*. The *northeast trade* is extended into a northwest wind in the southern summer, the *southeast trade* into a southwest wind in the northern summer. Thus on both sides of the *equator*, in the narrow *sub-equatorial belts* where this relation appears, the winds alternately blow from opposite directions as the seasons change. Winds of this kind are called *monsoons*. — WILLIAM M. DAVIS, "Physical Geography."

27. Observe the work of a carpenter or a mason.

Report what you have seen, using the technical names for the tools, materials, and processes which you describe.

28. Describe a door which you have carefully observed. Use the appropriate technical terms which are required to make your description accurate.

29. Make a list of technical terms used in the occupation with which you are most familiar (farming, ship-building, housekeeping, etc.). Be prepared to define any word in your list.

30. Make a list of at least ten slang phrases which have originated in borrowed technical terms. Example: — "You are off on a side-track." Explain the origin of each expression in your list.

31. In the following phrases or sentences you will find words which are used in a figurative sense.

Use these words in sentences. Then try to express the same thought without figures of speech.

(1) Murmuring pines. (2) The wail of the forest. (3) Gossiping looms. (4) His thought ripened into action. (5) The leaden air was oppressive. (6) Silence reigned in the household. (7) The fire was gone from his eye. (8) The ocean flew from the shore. (9) These were the waifs of the tide. (10) The moon climbs the crystal wall of heaven. (11) A golden day redeems a weary year. (12) He answered with a vacant stare. (13) I know the hunger and thirst of the spirit. (14) This is a shipwrecked nation. (15) He saw a towering oak. (16) A day in the opening spring. (17) The friendly streets looked just as they looked when he was a boy. (18) He returned from the fruitless search. (19) She wrung a scant subsistence from her

toil. (20) He was lost in thought. (21) He strove to win the palm. (22) This position was the goal of his ambition. (23) The news flew from village to village. (24) His son is the staff of his declining years. (25) He is steeped in forgetfulness. (26) The bird wheeled in the air. (27) Prune your thoughts. (28) Nesbit was spurred to action.

32. In the poems on pp. 102–105 pick out ten examples of figures of speech.

33. Make a paraphrase of the poem on page 105 in prose, and see whether the figures from the poetry will fit naturally into the prose.

34. Study the descriptive words and phrases in Lowell's "Vision of Sir Launfal." Select from the poem words which do not ordinarily occur in your own vocabulary, and use them in suitable sentences.

35. Bring to the class fifteen simple figurative expressions. Substitute non-figurative words, and compare the effect.

36. Explain the figures of speech in the following passages: —

(1) Northward he turneth through a little door,
And scarce three steps, ere music's golden tongue
Flattered to tears this aged man and poor.

(2) Oaths are straws, men's faiths are wafer-cakes.

(3) Now all the youth of England are on fire.

(4) His foes are so enrooted with his friends
That, plucking to unfix an enemy,
He doth unfasten so and shake a friend.

(5) Avaunt! Begone! thou hast set me on the rack.

(6) As many arrows, loosed several ways,
Come to one mark; as many ways meet in one town;
As many fresh streams meet in one salt sea;
As many lines close in the dial's centre;
So may a thousand actions, once afoot,
End in one purpose, and be all well borne
Without defeat.

(7) Great Nature spoke; observant man obeyed.

IMPROPRIETIES

The correct meanings of words are settled by good use (p. 346); violations of correctness are known as **improprieties.**

To the Teacher. — Improprieties are best studied when occasion arises, — that is, when they are observed in the pupil's writing or speaking. The word that is misused should be looked up in an unabridged dictionary, and the illustrative quotations noted; then the pupil should be required to use it and its synonyms in a number of original sentences. The exercises that follow are not intended to be studied in bulk, but rather to serve as indications of the commonest violations of good usage.

1. Define the verb *claim.* Study its correct use in the following sentences. Observe also the correct use of *allege, assert, maintain, hold.* How does *claim* differ from these verbs in meaning?

The son *claimed* his father's property.
The stranger *claims* to be a person of consequence.
A day will come when York shall *claim* his own.
This prince hath neither *claimed* it nor deserved it.
The Duke of Suffolk is the first, and *claims* to be high steward.
Of these am I, who thy protection *claim.*
He *asserts* that he has been injured.
He *declares* that there is no help for it.
How can you *maintain* that this Plato was not Aristotle's teacher?
It was *alleged* by their enemies that they refused to take the oaths to the government.
I *hold* they are not worth a dollar.
It has been repeatedly *affirmed* by the learned that opium is a dusky brown in color.

2. Study *fix, adjust, repair* as in Exercise 1. The words are correctly used in the following sentences: —

He *fixed* his eye on the target.
He *fixed* the stake in the ground.
The man *adjusted* his cravat.
I do not know how to *repair* my bicycle.

3. To *allude to* a thing is not the same as to *mention* it or to *refer to* it. An *allusion* is an indirect reference that suggests the subject without mentioning it distinctly. Thus, —

When he spoke of the effective mixture of comedy and tragedy in the Elizabethan drama, he was doubtless *alluding to* Shakspere, but he took care not to *mention* him; he did not even *refer to* any one of his plays by name.

Use these words correctly in sentences of your own.

4. Study the following groups of words as in Exercise 1: — testimony, verdict; team, vehicle, carriage; lie, lay; sit, set; vertical, perpendicular; demean, degrade; notorious, notable; healthy, healthful, wholesome; tang, twang; love, like; deprecate, depreciate; impute, impugn; luxurious, luxuriant; calculate, intend; purpose, propose; transpire, occur; affect, effect.

5. Study the following groups of words in the same way: — liable, likely; plead, argue; invent, discover; historic, historical; fire, throw; learn, teach; teacher, professor; among, between; quite, somewhat; definite, definitive; without, unless; person, party; bring, fetch, carry; settle, pay.

6. Study the following groups in the same way: — peer, paragon; less, fewer; posted, informed; fine, grand; clever, good-tempered; guess, think; lovely, pretty; practical, practicable; awfully, very; ugly, cross; right, just; name, mention; intelligible, intelligent; agree with, agree to; change for, change with; disappoint in, disappoint of; differ with, differ from; confide in, confide to; correspond with, correspond to; part from, part with; compare to, compare with.

The words in each of the following groups are worth studying with reference to distinction of meaning. In some of these groups an interchange of the words would be a gross violation of correctness; in others, usage allows it. In every case, however, the pupil will find it useful to know the distinctions that may be made.

Hypothesis, hypothecation; right, duty, privilege, prerogative; estop, prevent (p. 317); fear, apprehend, reverent, reverend; exploit (*verb*), display; proud, haughty; truth, honesty; stay, stop; common, vulgar; mad, angry; criticism, censure; copy, counterpart; restive, restless; confuse, confound; shop, store; ask, demand; give, bequeath; leave, depart, go away; prominent, conspicuous, distinguished; road, street; ride, drive; idle, lazy; loiter, saunter: confess, acknowledge; old, ancient, antique, venerable; strange, queer, odd, quaint, funny, weird;

guess, reckon, calculate, consider, allow, think (p. 312); expect, suspect, suppose; tragedy, murder, homicide; house, home, residence; atheist, deist, skeptic, infidel; frank, candid, blunt, plainspoken; pretty, handsome, beautiful; ubiquitous, omnipresent; college, university, school; see, witness; friend, acquaintance; trade, business, profession, occupation, vocation; attorney, barrister, counsel, lawyer; square, rectangular, oblong; robber, thief; bravery, fortitude, boldness; cowardice, timidity; piteous, pitiful, pitiable, compassionate, sympathetic; responsive, responsible; sophistry, fallacy; fortnightly, biweekly; human, mortal; poisonous, venomous; perspicuous, perspicacious; wise, learned; artist, artisan; engine, locomotive; act, bill; partly, partially; whole, all; mother-in-law, stepmother; hail, address, accost; advise, recommend; nice, agreeable, attractive; aggravate, exasperate; antagonize, oppose.

APPENDIX

COMMON ERRORS IN ORAL AND WRITTEN COMPOSITION

Violation of the rules of grammar proclaims the unlettered writer or speaker. Since our use of language is largely determined by imitation, errors often repeated by others may slip into our own speech. Grammar is treated in "The Mother Tongue," Book II, to which reference may be made if necessary. What follows is merely a summary convenient for reference. Debatable constructions, in which either of two forms is allowed by good usage, are purposely omitted.

1. *Without* should not be used in the sense of *unless*, nor *like* in the sense of *as*. The following sentences are correct: —

> You cannot do that *unless* I help you. [Not: *without* I help you.]
> You cannot do that *without me*.
> He acted *like* a madman.
> I do not sew *as* you do. [Not: *like* you do.]

2. The superlative degree should not be used for the comparative. The comparative degree refers to one of two objects or groups of objects; the superlative, to one of three or more objects or groups of objects.

3. *Either* and *neither* should not be used in place of *any*. *Either* and *neither* are used in referring to one of two: *any* or *any one* in referring to one of three or more.

4. *Sort* and *kind* should be preceded by the singular demonstrative and not by the plural. Thus, — "*this* sort, or kind," not *these*; "*that* sort, or kind," not *those*.

5. The article should not be inserted in a phrase which depends upon *kind* or *sort*. We should say "this kind of boy," not "this kind of *a* boy"; "this manner of person," not "this manner of *a* person"; "this sort of thing," not "this sort of *a* thing."

6. The case forms of pronouns should conform to the grammatical structure of the sentence. Thus, in the subject construction, "*You* and *I* did it"; "*We* boys are going to town," etc. In the predicate nominative (or attribute), — "It was *I* (*he*, *she*, etc.)," not *me*, *him*, *her*; "If you were *I*," not *me*; in the objective case after a preposition, — "It is between you and *me*"; "He sent for John and *me*."

We know the culprit to be *him*. [Objective, agreeing with *culprit*, the subject of the infinitive.]

We know that the culprit is *he*. [Predicate nominative or attribute.]

The culprit was known to be *he*. [Predicate nominative or attribute.]

I felt sure of its being *he*. [Predicate nominative or attribute; compare, — I felt sure that it was *he*.]

She is taller than *I*. [That is, — than I *am*. Hence the nominative.]

7. The genitive (possessive) case of the noun or pronoun should be used before the verbal noun in *-ing*. Thus, —

I was sure of *its* being he. [Not: *it*.]
I heard of *John's* being elected. [Not: *John*.]

8. *Their* should not refer back to a singular noun or pronoun. Thus, —

Every pupil should bring *his* own book. [Not: *their*.]
Each one of us has *his* own troubles. [Not: *their* or *our*.]

9. In such sentences as the following, *his* is correct,[1] but not always graceful: —

Every boy and girl should attend to *his* own lesson. [*Their* would be wrong; *his or her* may be used if the distinction of gender is important.]

[1] In such sentences, *his* may be regarded as of common gender. The construction may often be avoided by using a noun like *person*, *pupil*, or the like, which applies to both genders.

10. *Who* and *whom* should be carefully distinguished in construction. Thus, —

The man *who* hesitates is lost. [Subject of *hesitates.*]
The man *whom* you met is my brother. [Object of *met.*]
Who is that odd-looking person? [Subject of *is.*]
Whom do you wish to see? [Object of *see.*]
Whom did you refer to? [Object of *to.*][1]
Who do you think I am? [Predicate nominative (attribute), in the same case as *I.*]
Whom do you take me to be? [Predicate objective in the same case as *me.*]

11. Avoid the use of *and which* when a relative construction does not precede. The following sentence is ungrammatical: —

He gave me a number of flowers of great beauty *and which* had rarely been found in that region. [The construction demands — *which were of great beauty and which;* otherwise the conjunction joins incongruous constructions.]

The same error is common with *but which.*

The ungrammatical use of *and which* is very common, and occurs in good authors. It should be avoided, however: for, even if it is defensible on the ground of usage, it is always ungraceful.

12. After *look, sound, taste, smell, feel,* an adjective is used to describe the subject. Thus, —

She looks *beautiful.* [Not: looks beautifully.]
The bells sound *harsh.* [Not: sound harshly.]
My luncheon tastes *good.* [Not: tastes well.]
The flowers smell *sweet.* [Not: smell sweetly.]
Velvet feels *smooth.* [Not: feels smoothly.]

"I feel *well,*" is correct, for *well* is an adjective in this use.

[1] "*To whom* did you refer?" is often preferred, but this order is too formal for habitual use in ordinary conversation. The best writers use the less formal order freely, despite the objection of some rhetoricians. The preposition at the end of the clause or sentence sometimes, but not always, produces an awkward effect. No rule can be laid down.

13. In the First Person *shall*, not *will*, is the auxiliary of the Future Tense in both assertions and questions. It denotes simple futurity, without expressing willingness, desire, or determination.[1]

Will in the First Person is used in promising, threatening, consenting, and expressing resolution. It never denotes simple futurity.

I will give you a thousand dollars to do this. [Promise.]
I will shoot the first man that runs. [Threat.]
I will accompany you, since you wish it. [Consent.]
I will fight it out on this line if it takes all summer. [Resolution.]

I'll and *we'll* stand for *I will* and *we will*, and are proper only when *I will* and *we will* would be correct. They can never stand for *I shall* and *we shall*.

The use of *will* for *shall* in the first person of the future is a common but gross error. Thus, —

We *will* all die some day. [Wrong, unless what one means is "We are determined to die." Say: "We *shall*."]
I *will* be glad to help you. [Say: "I *shall* be glad."]

Such expressions as *I shall be glad, I shall be willing, I shall be charmed to do this*, express willingness not by means of *shall* but in the adjectives *glad, willing, charmed*. To say "I *will be glad* to do this," then, would be wrong, for it would be to express volition twice. Such a sentence could only mean "*I am determined* to be glad to do this."

14. In the Second Person *shall you?* not *will you?* is the proper form of the Future Tense in questions.

Will you? always denotes willingness, consent, or determination, and never simple futurity.

I. Future Tense (simple futurity).

Shall you *vote* for Jackson? [That is, Are you going to vote for him as a matter of fact?]
Shall you *try* to win the prize?
Shall you *go* to Paris in June or in July?

[1] Nos. 13–15 are from "The Mother Tongue," Book II, pp. 242–3.

II. Verb-phrase denoting Willingness, etc.

Will you *lend* me ten dollars as a favor?
Will you *try* to write better?
Will you *insist* on this demand?

15. *Shall* in the second and third persons is not the sign of the future tense in declarative sentences.

It is used in commanding, promising, threatening, and expressing resolution, the volition being that of the speaker. Thus, —

Thou *shalt* not *steal*. [Command.]
You *shall have* a dollar if you run this errand. [Promise.]
You *shall be punished* if you defy me. [Threat.]
He *shall be punished* if he defies me. [Threat.]
You *shall* never *see* him again. [Determination.]
He *shall leave* the house instantly. [Determination.]

16. In indirect discourse *shall* and *should* are used when they would have been used in direct statement. Thus, —

He declares that he *shall die* if he is not helped. [Direct: I *shall* die.]
He declared that he *should die* if he were not helped. [Direct: I *shall*.]
You say you *should like* to see him. [Direct: I *should* like.]
I promised that the money *should be* ready. [Direct: The money *shall* be ready.]
Thomson says that he *will* not *pay* this bill. [Direct: I *will* not.]
You promised that you *would help* me. [Direct: I *will*.]

17. The tenses of the subordinate clauses of a complex sentence and of dependent relatives must be adjusted to the tense of the principal verb, and to the meaning of the sentence.

Inserting a definite adverb or adverbial phrase of time will often help you to decide which tense you should use.

In the sentence "They learned that a stitch in time *saves* nine," if you mean that they learned the general truth that a stitch in time saves nine, *saves* is correct. If you refer to one past instance only, you should use *saved*.

"I thought that he ought to have done it" and "I thought that he ought to do it" are both correct; but they are not interchangeable, since they convey different ideas.

18. Words necessary to the construction must not be omitted.

I have not *done it* and I will not do it. [Not: I have not, and I will not do it.]

a. In written language, sentences should not end with the sign of the infinitive. Thus, — "I could learn in an hour all that I cared to" might pass in conversation, but it is not accurate enough for written language. "All that I cared to learn" would properly complete the sentence.

b. In a long sentence, it sometimes happens that the predicate verb is actually omitted, on account of the trailing dependent clauses which arrest the thought of the speaker or writer. Be sure that you can instantly point out the main clause, with its subject and its verb, in every sentence that you write. If you hesitate, it is a sign that your sentence needs to be rewritten.

c. Omission of the subject should be restricted to the telegraphic style. "Yours received. Ought to have written before. Will send the goods immediately," is too curt to be either polite or elegant.

19. The participle, being grammatically an adjective, must belong to a substantive expressed in the sentence.

I sent you back the "Quarterly" without perusal, having resolved to read no more reviews. [Not: The "Quarterly" was sent back without perusal, having resolved to read no more reviews.]

A few participles may be idiomatically used without a noun in agreement. Such are *considering, regarding, concerning, owing to,* which are practically prepositions. *Speaking* is also used independently in a few phrases: as, — "generally *speaking*," "strictly *speaking*." *Supposing* is also defensible, but *suppose* is neater.

Due to should not be used for *owing to* in such a sentence as the following: — "*Owing to* the severe weather, observations could not be taken."

20. The verb should agree with its subject in person and number. To avoid error, keep the subject clearly in mind in every sentence. Take care that the verb is not so widely separated from the subject that the connection is lost.

a. When the subject may be regarded as either singular or plural, the same construction should be maintained throughout the passage. In every sentence which has for its subject a collective noun, be on your guard against any change of number either in the verb or in pronouns referring to the subject.

b. A "compound subject," composed of nouns or pronouns connected by *and*, *or*, or *nor*, demands careful attention to the verb. When the parts of the subject are joined by *or* or *nor*, the verb is singular. When they are joined by *and*, the verb is almost always plural.

c. Difficulties in the use of compound subjects may sometimes be obviated by the use of *with* or *as well as*. Thus, — "Night air, together with draughts, *is* the bugbear of fearful patients." Note that the singular is the only defensible form in this case.

21. Modifying words and phrases should be so placed that there can be no question as to the word they modify. If there is any doubt, the sentence should be rearranged or rewritten.

A horse having a beautiful tail and mane stood at the post. [Not: A horse stood at the post having a beautiful tail and mane.]

22. Pronouns should be so used that there can be no doubt to what person or thing each refers. If there is any doubt, it is always better to insert another word or to rearrange the sentence.

The doctor told his brother that the latter could not go out on account of the rain. Or, —

The doctor, speaking to his brother, said, "I cannot go out on account of the weather." [Not: The doctor told his brother that *he* could not go out on account of the weather.]

23. *Only* should be so placed in the sentence that there can be no doubt what word or phrase it modifies.

"My sister and I go only to concerts in the evening," means that we go nowhere else.

"Only my sister and I go to concerts in the evening," means that no one else in the family goes.

"My sister and I go to concerts in the evening only," means that we do not go in the daytime.

Good usage does not fix absolutely the position of *only* with respect to the word that it modifies. There is but one safe rule: — "Shun ambiguity." If this is observed, the pupil may feel secure.

24. An adverb should not be placed between the infinitive and its sign (*to*). The following sentences are correct: —

It is my wish *never to see* him again.

The antelope began *to run swiftly* across the plain. [Not: The antelope began to swiftly run across the plain.]

The "split infinitive" is sometimes used by good writers; but it is not authorized by the general usage of the best authors.

25. The article or the possessive should be repeated with two or more connected nouns or adjectives whenever clearness or precision requires it. Thus, —

I will confer with *the* secretary and *the* treasurer.

In such sentences as the following no repetition is necessary, since no confusion is possible: —

I will ask all *the boys and girls* in my class.
He was very fond of *his father and mother.*

When you are in doubt, however, it is safer to repeat.

Hard-and-fast rules calling for the repetition in sentences like those just quoted are common in text-books but not justified by good usage.

When the second noun is followed by a modifier which does not belong to the first, the article or pronoun should be repeated, for clearness. Thus, —

I have little doubt but that, if *an arm or leg* could have been taken off with as little pain as attends the amputation of *a curl or a lock of hair*, the natural limb would have been thought less becoming, or less convenient, by some men, than a wooden one, and have been disposed of accordingly. — COWPER.

PHRASES

1. A phrase is a group of connected words, not containing a subject and a predicate: as, — a friend of mankind; with all his might; following the flag; will be killed.

Phrases are classified as noun phrases, adjective phrases, adverbial phrases, and verb phrases, according to the parts of speech for which they stand. Thus, —

The cause of the fire is unknown. [Noun phrase.]
A man *of honor* [= an *honorable* man] will not lie. [Adjective phrase.]
He came *with speed* [= *speedily*]. [Adverbial phrase.]
This river *must be crossed*. [Verb phrase.]

A phrase consisting of a preposition and its object may be called a prepositional phrase.

A phrase consisting of a participle and its object or modifiers may be called a participial phrase.

A phrase consisting of an infinitive and its object or modifiers may be called an infinitive phrase.

2. Prepositional phrases may be either adjective or adverbial.

I. Adjective Phrases

The balustrades *of the staircase* were *of carved wood*.
The gentleness *of heaven* is on the sea.
What do we look for in studying the history *of a past age?*
A man *with a dirty foraging cap on his head* came running up to me.
The western wall was quite *in ruins*.
Children love to listen to stories *about their elders*.
The first of these gentlemen was *somewhat above the middle height*.

II. Adverbial Phrases

I will answer him as clearly as I am able, and *with great openness*.
Every man went daily *to his coffee-house*.
In winter his chair was always *in the warmest nook*.
They were in the habit of dividing the year *between town and country*.
Loathsome creatures seemed to sit *close beside him on either hand*.
His letters to his friends are full *of courage*.
She turned her steps *towards town*.
Her imagination dwelt complacently *on the idea*.
Since his marriage Mr. Philip had been pretty fortunate.

3. Participial phrases are common as adjective modifiers. Thus, —

These are evils *belonging specifically to a monarchy*.

To the other ladies *boarding at Madame's establishment* the General was provokingly polite.

The reasoning elephant went away, *rejoicing in his new possession*.

And so, *followed by his people*, he rode away.

Warned by former experience, I did not now embark in a small boat.

The son, *bred in sloth and idleness*, becomes a spendthrift.

Pursued by the fiend Remorse, he fled early from his house.

I found him *preparing to go to Westminster Hall*.

For the idiomatic use of a few participles as prepositions or adverbial modifiers, see p. 448.

4. Infinitive phrases may be used as nouns, as adjectives, or as adverbs. Thus, —

I. As Nouns

To make a government requires no great prudence. [Subject.]

To be thus is *nothing*.

To be strong-backed and neat-bound is the desideratum of a volume. Magnificence comes after.

Not to go back, is somewhat to advance.

His care now was *to furnish* us with refreshments. [Predicate nominative.]

The one thing which we seek is *to forget ourselves*.

The infinitive or infinitive phrase is especially common in the predicate when the so-called "expletive *it*" is used as the formal subject (as, — It would have done any man's heart good *to see their merriment*). Here the infinitive phrase, though the logical subject, may be regarded as grammatically in apposition with *it*.

II. As Adjective Modifiers

I have nothing to *suggest*.

I felt very slight inclination *to leave the town behind*.

There is not much in the appearance of the Guadalquivir *to interest the traveller*.

I had very little pleasure *to anticipate from novelty of scenery*.

What reason have you *to complain of your entertainment?*

He shall have my authority *to carve it upon the Great Pyramid*.

A door is *to be painted*, a lock *to be repaired*.

III. As Adverbial Modifiers

We aim above the mark, *to hit the mark.* [Purpose.]
This force sailed *to invade the Lowlands.*
I feel willing *to release you.* [Modifying an adjective.]
The plan is not likely *to be successful.*
I am not able *to decide the question.*
He wished *to write in my stead.* [Complementary.]
Now for the first time I seem *to know anything rightly.*
Argyle proceeded *to appoint officers.*

An infinitive or infinitive phrase may modify a verb by completing its meaning (as, — I desire *to see you*), or by expressing the purpose of the action (as, — I have come *to see you*). In the former construction it is called the complementary infinitive. After some verbs, the infinitive approaches the construction of a pure noun. In such case it is often regarded as the object of the verb. Thus, — I desire *to see* you (compare, I desire a *sight* of you). It is simpler, however, to regard all such infinitives as complementary phrases and to treat them as adverbial modifiers. For it is impossible to distinguish the construction of the infinitive after certain adjectives (for example, I am eager *to see* you) from its construction after such verbs as *wish* and *desire.*

CLAUSES

5. A clause is a group of words that forms part of a sentence and that contains a subject and a predicate: as, —

The ladder fell and *the painter was injured.*
I will come *if you wish.*
The dog barked *when he saw the burglar.*
The command was given to Elphinstone, *who had proved himself more disposed to argue than to fight.*

A clause may be either independent or dependent (or subordinate).

A clause is independent when it could stand alone as a complete sentence. It is dependent (or subordinate) when it is used as a noun, as an adjective modifier, or as an adverbial modifier.

Two or more independent clauses are coördinate when they stand in the same sentence: as, —

The door opened | and | *the little gentleman entered the room.*

6. A compound sentence consists of two or more coördinate clauses, which may or may not be joined by means of conjunctions. Thus, —

We see the noble suffer afar off, | and | they repel us: | why should we intrude?

James was unusually discomfited; | he even shed tears.

Only four officers were left; | the stock of provisions was scanty; | and | the commander was a young man of five and twenty.

He may be right or wrong in his opinion, | but | he is too clear-headed to be unjust.

The only reward of virtue is virtue; | the only way to have a friend is to be one.

We talk of choosing our friends, | but | friends are self-elected.

A river overflows and turns a fruitful plain into a marsh; | or | it fails, and turns it into a sandy desert.

And, but, for,[1] and *neither . . . nor*, connect coördinate clauses and are called coördinate conjunctions.

7. A complex sentence consists of two or more clauses, at least one of which is subordinate: as, —

I was on the third floor *when the fire broke out.*

A subordinate clause may be introduced by (1) a relative or an interrogative pronoun, (2) a relative or an interrogative adverb, (3) a subordinate conjunction.

The relative pronouns are: *who, which, what, that* (= *who* or *which*), *as* (after *such*), and the compound relatives *whoever, whichever, whatever, whosoever, whichsoever, whatsoever.*

The chief relative adverbs are: *when, whenever, since, until, before, after, where, whence, whither, wherever, why, as, how.*

The interrogative pronouns are: *who, which, what.*

The interrogative adverbs are: *when, where, whence, whither, how, why.*

The most important subordinate conjunctions are: *because, since* (= *because*), *though, although, if, unless, that* (*in order that, so that*), *lest, as, as if, as though, than, whether.*

[1] *For* is sometimes regarded as a subordinate conjunction; but the fact that it often introduces an independent sentence, or even a paragraph, is a sufficient proof that it is really coördinate. Thus Matthew Arnold opens a paragraph as follows: — "For the practical man is not apt for fine distinctions, and yet in these distinctions truth and the highest culture greatly find their account."

8. Subordinate clauses may be used (1) as substantives, (2) as adjective modifiers, (3) as adverbial modifiers. Thus, —

(1) *That nothing can come of nothing* is an old proverb.
(2) The town *where I live* is called Milton.
(3) He sprang up *when he heard the cry.*

9. A substantive clause may be used as subject, as object, as predicate nominative, or as appositive. Thus, —

That he never will, is sure. [Subject.]
How I fared will presently be seen.
That the kind of fear here treated of is purely spiritual — that it is strong in proportion as it is objectless upon earth — that it predominates in the period of sinless infancy — are difficulties the solution of which might afford some probable insight into our ante-mundane condition, and a peep at least into the shadow-land of preëxistence.
I knew by their looks *that they had been promised something great.* [Direct Object.]
Experience taught the King of Bantam *that water cannot become solid.*
He asked *whether I understood Portuguese.*
He did not know *in what light his friends would regard his escapade.*
Whether all this contrivance be necessary, I do not know.
Much depends on *when and where you read a book.* [Object of *on.*]
The objection is *that it scatters your force.* [Predicate nominative.]
It is no wonder *that echoes should abound.* [Appositive with *it.*]
It may be said *that true wisdom consists in the ready and accurate perception of analogies.*
The fact *that he was absent* was not noticed. [Appositive.]
In one thing I must ask to be forgiven, *that I talk more sparingly of home affairs.*

10. The commonest kind of adjective clause is that introduced by a relative pronoun. This clause has two uses: — (1) to add a merely descriptive fact (as, — The ship sailed from Naples, *which is in Italy*); (2) to restrict the application of the antecedent (as, — He sat down in the chair *which was nearest*).

(1) Cochrane, *who wanted provisions*, was determined to land.
These people have for several generations lived distinct from the great mass of the community, like the gypsies of Europe, *whom they closely resemble.*
The wise know that foolish legislation is a rope of sand, *which perishes in the twisting.*
Isaac was seized with a fever, *from which he slowly recovered.*

(2) Of all the poets *who have introduced into their works the agency of supernatural beings*, Milton has succeeded best.

I will not attempt to describe the scene of horror and confusion *which ensued.*

The first lesson in reading well is that *which teaches us to distinguish between literature and merely printed matter.*

The person *who screams, or uses the superlative degree, or converses with heat*, puts whole drawing rooms to flight.

There was something about it *that did not entirely please me.*

11. The principal ideas expressed by subordinate clauses may be classified under (1) time or place, (2) cause, (3) concession, (4) purpose, (5) result, (6) condition, (7) comparison (or manner and degree), (8) indirect statement, (9) indirect question.

I. Time or Place

[The first five examples are adjective clauses, the rest are adverbial.]

You are now arrived at an age *when pleasure dissuades from application.*

The morning arrived *on which we were to entertain our young landlord.*

A garret is like a seashore, *where wrecks are thrown up and slowly go to pieces.*

I know of no country *where the influence of climate is more visible.*

About half a mile from the wall is a fountain, *where the muleteers water their animals.*

When a lady speaks, it is not civil to make her wait for an answer.

Dr. Acton came down *while I was there.*

As we were thus engaged, we saw a stag bound nimbly by.

As soon as we arrive at Moscow, you shall be informed.

We drove leisurely along *till we came to the brow of a steep hill.*

I had to proceed three leagues *before I could reach the hostelry.*

They divided the skin *before they had taken the beast.*

Why, *after the king had consented to so many reforms*, did the Parliament continue to rise in their demands ?

II. Cause

Their speech was noble *because they lunched with Plutarch and supped with Plato.*

Since age and infirmity forbid my appearance at such public places, the next happiness is to make the best use of privacy.

I was pleased with the poor man's friendship for two reasons, — *because I knew that he wanted mine, and because I knew him to be friendly.*

As it remained with me to make them happy, I readily gave a promise.

III. Concession

Though this be madness, yet there 's method in 't.

Nature is always consistent, *though she feigns to contravene her own laws.*

Yet, *paltry as these matters are*, they make a subject of debate wherever I go.

Although you are my friend, I am not blind to your faults.

Even if you do your best, success is doubtful.

IV. Purpose [1]

The captain hastened to the castle *in order that the plot might be frustrated.*

He saved all he could, *so that he might have comfort in his old age.*

I am merry *that I may decoy people into my company*, and grave *that they may be the better for it.*

He feared to stir, *lest he should awaken his captors.*

V. Result [2]

You are so slender, and take up so little room, *that you are sure of a place.*

He became at length so confident of his force, so collected in his might, *that he made no secret whatsoever of his dreadful resolution.*

The sale of books was so small *that an author could expect but a pittance.*

There was such a crowd *that our progress was very slow.*

VI. Condition

If a dog howls dolefully at night, it is looked upon as a sure sign of death.

If you mean to follow your true motive, give up your tax on tea for raising a revenue.

If we cannot extinguish, let us at least suspend our animosities.

If any dispute arises, they apply to him for decision.

Clap an extinguisher upon your irony, *if you are unhappily blessed with a vein of it.*

If I have not sooner made answer to your kind enquiries, it has been owing to the uncertainty I was under.

[1] Purpose is often expressed by the infinitive (p. 453).

[2] Result is often expressed by the infinitive with *so as* (for example, — They were *so* civil *as not to search my pockets*).

If I shall happen to mistake in any fact of consequence, I desire my remarks upon it may pass for nothing.

If this be not violent exercise for the mind, I know not what is.

If you would see the humor of a coquette pushed to the last excess, you may find an instance of it in the following story.

The annals of this voracious beach! who could write them, *unless it were a shipwrecked sailor.*

"*Unless this is done,*" said he, "I shall not sleep quietly in my grave."

VII. Comparison

The first time I read an excellent book, it is to me *just as if I had gained a new friend.*

You do indeed love these things, *so far as you care about art at all.*

The public character of Milton must be approved or condemned *according as the resistance of the people to Charles I shall appear to be justifiable or criminal.*

The more trifling the subject is, the more he has to say.

VIII. Indirect Statement

You will undoubtedly assert *that such a stipend is too great.*

I confess *that I do feel the differences of mankind.*

He perceives *that he should have been more cool.*

They thought *they had an excellent opportunity to practice imposition.*

It is said *that Portia swallowed fire.*

The report *that the battle was lost* proved false.

That time is money is a familiar saying.

IX. Indirect Question

How many were killed is uncertain.

It is debated *whether arts and sciences are more beneficial or prejudicial to mankind.*

What the gardens of the Hesperides were, we have little or no account.

What dignity is derived from the perseverance in absurdity, is more than ever I could discern.

I asked him *if in his journeys he had never been attacked by robbers.*

Hunt asked *what sort of wife Philip had married.*

He demanded of the fellow *how he dared to touch the baggage.*

USE OF CAPITAL LETTERS

1. Every sentence begins with a capital letter.

2. Every line of poetry begins with a capital letter.

3. The first word of every direct quotation begins with a capital letter.

NOTE. — This rule does not apply to quoted fragments of sentences.

4. Every proper noun or abbreviation of a proper noun begins with a capital letter.

5. Most adjectives derived from proper nouns begin with capital letters: as, — *American, Indian, Swedish, Spenserian.*

NOTE. — Some adjectives derived from proper nouns have ceased to be closely associated in thought with the nouns from which they come, and therefore begin with small letters. Thus, — voltaic, galvanic, mesmeric, maudlin, stentorian.

6. Every title attached to the name of a person begins with a capital letter.

7. In titles of books, etc., the first word, as well as every important word that follows, begins with a capital letter.

8. The interjection *O* and the pronoun *I* are always written in capital letters.

9. Personal pronouns referring to the Deity are often capitalized.

NOTE. — Usage varies: the personal pronouns are commonly capitalized, the relatives less frequently. The rule is often disregarded altogether when its observance would result in a multitude of capitals; so in the Bible and in many hymn books and works of theology.

10. Common nouns and adjectives often begin with capital letters when they designate the topics or main points of definitions or similar statements. Such capitals are called **emphatic (or topical) capitals.**

NOTE. — Emphatic (or topical) capitals are analogous to capitals in the titles of books (see Rule 7), but their use is not obligatory. They are especially common in text-books and other elementary manuals.

RULES OF PUNCTUATION[1]

The common marks of punctuation are the period, the interrogation point, the exclamation point, the comma, the semicolon, the colon, the dash, marks of parenthesis, and quotation marks. The hyphen and the apostrophe may be conveniently treated along with marks of punctuation.

I

1. The period, the interrogation point, and the exclamation point are used at the end of sentences. Every complete sentence must be followed by one of these three marks.

The end of a declarative or an imperative sentence is marked by a period. But a declarative or an imperative sentence that is likewise exclamatory may be followed by an exclamation point instead of a period.

The end of a direct question is marked by an interrogation point.

An exclamatory sentence in the form of an indirect question is followed by an exclamation point: as, — "How absolute the knave is!"

2. A period is used after an abbreviation.

3. An exclamation point is used after an exclamatory word or phrase.

NOTE. — This rule is not absolute. Most interjections take the exclamation point. With other words and with phrases, usage differs; if strong feeling is expressed, the exclamation point is commonly used, but too many such marks deface the page.

[1] The main rules of punctuation are well fixed and depend on important distinctions in sentence structure and consequently in thought. In detail, however, there is much variety of usage, and care should be taken not to insist on such uniformity in the pupils' practice as is not found in the printed books which they use. If young writers can be induced to indicate the ends of their sentences properly, much has been accomplished.

II

The comma is used —

1. After a noun (or a phrase) of direct address (a *vocative nominative*).

NOTE 1. — If the noun is exclamatory, an exclamation point may be used instead of a comma.

NOTE 2. — For the punctuation after the salutation in a letter, see p. 403.

2. Before a direct quotation in a sentence. Thus, —

The cry ran through the ranks, "Are we never to move forward?"

NOTE. — When the quotation is long or formal, a colon, or a colon and a dash, may be used instead of a comma, especially with the words *as follows*.

3. After a direct quotation when this is the subject or the object of a following verb. Thus, —

"They are coming; the attack will be made on the centre," said Lord Fitzroy Somerset.

"I see it," was the cool reply of the duke.

NOTE. — If the quotation ends with an interrogation point or an exclamation point, no comma is used.

4. To separate words, or groups of words, arranged in a coördinate series, when these are not connected by *and*, *or*, or *nor*.

If the conjunction is used to connect the last two members of the series but omitted with the others, the comma may be used before the conjunction.

I found two saws, an axe, and a hammer.

They were so shy, so subtle, and so swift of foot, that it was difficult to come at them.

It would make the reader pity me to tell what odd, misshapen, ugly things I made.

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose.

NOTE 1. — Commas may be used even when conjunctions are expressed, if the members of the series consist of several words, or if the writer wishes to emphasize their distinctness.

NOTE 2. — Clauses in a series are commonly separated by semicolons unless they are short and simple (see p. 464).

5. To set off words and phrases out of their regular order. Thus, —

Seated on her accustomed chair, with her usual air of apathy and want of interest in what surrounded her, she seemed now and then mechanically to resume the motion of twirling her spindle. — Scott.

6. To separate a long subject from the verb of the predicate. Thus, —

To have passed them over in an historical sketch of my literary life and opinions, would have seemed to me like the denial of a debt. — Coleridge.

7. To set off an appositive noun or an appositive adjective, with its modifiers. Thus, —

I have had the most amusing letter from Hogg, the Ettrick minstrel.

There was an impression upon the public mind, natural enough from the continually augmenting velocity of the mail, but quite erroneous, that an outside seat on this class of carriages was a post of danger.

De Quincey.

Note 1. — Many participial and other adjective phrases come under this head. Thus, —

The genius, seeing me indulge myself on this melancholy prospect, told me I had dwelt long enough upon it. — Addison.

Note 2. — If a noun and its appositive are so closely connected as to form one idea, no comma is used. Thus, —

My friend Jackson lives in San Francisco.

Note 3. — An intensive pronoun (*myself*, etc.) is not separated by a comma from the substantive which it emphasizes.

Note 4. — A series of words or phrases in apposition with a single substantive is sometimes set off, as a whole, by a comma and a dash.

8. To set off a subordinate clause, especially one introduced by a descriptive relative. Thus, —

I am going to take a last dinner with a most agreeable family, who have been my only neighbors ever since I have lived at Weston. — Cowper.

Note. — No comma is used before a restrictive relative. Thus, —

I want to know many things which only you can tell me.

Perhaps I am the only man in England who can boast of such good fortune.

9. To set off a phrase containing a nominative absolute. Thus, —

They had some difficulty in passing the ferry at the riverside, the ferryman being afraid of them. — De Foe.

10. To set off *however*, *nevertheless*, *moreover*, etc., and introductory phrases like *in the first place*, *on the one hand*, etc.

11. To set off a parenthetical expression. For this purpose commas, dashes, or marks of parenthesis may be used.

When the parenthetical matter is brief or closely related to the rest of the sentence, it is generally set off by commas. Thus, —

I exercised a piece of hypocrisy for which, I hope, you will hold me excused. — Thackeray.

When it is longer and more independent, it is generally marked off by dashes, or enclosed in marks of parenthesis. The latter are less frequently used at present than formerly.

The connection of the mail with the state and the executive government — a connection obvious, but yet not strictly defined — gave to the whole mail establishment an official grandeur. — De Quincey.

Note. — Brackets are used to indicate insertions that are not part of the text.

III

The clauses of a compound sentence may be separated by colons, semicolons, or commas.

1. The colon is used —

a. To show that the second of two clauses repeats the substance of the first in another form, or defines the first as an appositive defines a noun. Thus, —

This was the practice of the Grecian stage. But Terence made an innovation in the Roman: all his plays have double actions. — Dryden.

b. To separate two groups of clauses one or both of which contain a semicolon. Thus, —

At that time, news such as we had heard might have been long in penetrating so far into the recesses of the mountains; but now, as you know, the approach is easy, and the communication, in summer time, almost

hourly: nor is this strange, for travellers after pleasure are become not less active, and more numerous, than those who formerly left their homes for purposes of gain. — WORDSWORTH.

NOTE. — The colon is less used now than formerly. The tendency is to use a semicolon or to begin a new sentence.

2. The semicolon is used when the clauses are of the same general nature and contribute to the same general effect, especially if one or more of them contain commas. Thus, —

The sky was cloudless; the sun shone out bright and warm; the songs of birds, and hum of myriads of summer insects filled the air; and the cottage garden, crowded with every rich and beautiful tint, sparkled in the heavy dew like beds of glittering jewels. — DICKENS.

3. The comma may be used when the clauses are short and simple (see p. 461).

NOTE. — The choice between colon, semicolon, and comma is determined in many cases by the writer's feeling of the closer or the looser connection of the ideas expressed by the several clauses, and is to some extent a matter of taste.

IV

1. In a complex sentence the dependent clause is generally separated from the main clause by a comma. But when the dependent clause is short and the connection close, the comma may be omitted.

NOTE. — A restrictive relative clause is not preceded by a comma (see p. 462).

2. The clauses of a series, when in the same dependent construction, are often separated by semicolons to give more emphasis to each. Thus, —

[Mrs. Battle] was none of your lukewarm gamesters, your half-and-half players, who have no objection to take a hand if you want one to make up a rubber; who affirm that they have no pleasure in winning; that they like to win one game and lose another; that they can while away an hour very agreeably at a card-table, but are indifferent whether they play or no; and will desire an adversary, who has slipped a wrong card, to take it up and play another. — LAMB.

V

1. A direct quotation is enclosed in quotation marks.

NOTE. — If the quotation stands by itself and is printed in different type, the marks may be omitted.

2. A quotation within a quotation is usually enclosed in single quotation marks.

3. In a quotation consisting of several paragraphs, quotation marks are put at the beginning of each paragraph and at the end of the last.

NOTE. — For the punctuation before a quotation, see p. 461.

4. When a book, poem, or the like, is referred to, the title may be enclosed in quotation marks or italicized.

VI

1. Sudden changes in thought and feeling or breaks in speech are indicated by dashes. Thus, —

Eh! — what — why — upon my life, and so it is — Charley, my boy, so it's you, is it? — LEVER.

2. Parenthetical expressions may be set off by dashes (see p. 463).

3. A colon, or colon and dash, may precede an enumeration, a direct quotation, or a statement formally introduced, — especially with *as follows*, *namely*, and the like. Thus, —

There are eight parts of speech: — nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections.

4. The dash is sometimes used to strengthen a comma (as in the last paragraph but one).

NOTE. — For the dash in the salutation of a letter, see p. 403.

VII

1. The apostrophe is used —

   a. To mark the omission of a letter or letters in contractions.
   b. As a sign of the genitive or possessive.
   c. To indicate the plural of letters, signs, etc.

2. The hyphen is used —

   a. When the parts of a word are separated in writing.
   b. Between the parts of some compound words. (See the Dictionary in each case.)

BUSINESS FORMS

Brief papers of a business character, like bills, notes, receipts, and checks, are drawn up in accordance with certain well-established forms.

For these forms the pupil may properly consult his arithmetic or his copy-book.

For convenience, however, specimens of such papers are given below.

[Time Note]

$375.25. PHILADELPHIA, PA., April 2, 1901.

Six months after date, I promise to pay Benjamin Parker three hundred seventy-five and $\frac{25}{100}$ dollars, with interest at 5%. Value received.

ROBERT OVERTON.

[Demand Note]

$375.25. PHILADELPHIA, PA., April 17, 1901.

On demand, I promise to pay Benjamin Parker three hundred seventy-five and $\frac{25}{100}$ dollars, with interest at 5%. Value received.

ROBERT OVERTON.

These are *promissory notes.* They are payable to Benjamin Parker alone unless they bear his signature on the back (endorsement). In either note the name of Benjamin Parker might be followed by the words *or bearer,* in which case the note would be payable to any one having lawful possession of it. Or the name might be followed by the words *or order,* when the note would become payable to the bearer if endorsed by Benjamin Parker.

[Bank Draft]

$600.25. NEW YORK, N.Y., August 12, 1900.

Pay to the order of James Drew six hundred and $\frac{25}{100}$ dollars, value received, and charge to account of

Shoe & Leather National Bank, Boston, Mass. SMITH, LELAND & Co.

[Bank Check]

$310.50. BOSTON, MASS., March 27, 1901.

Third National Bank, Boston, Mass.

Pay to the order of John Hill three hundred ten and $\frac{50}{100}$ dollars.

JOHN ENDERBY.

[Receipt on account]

$520. CHICAGO, ILL., Dec. 22, 1900.

Received of James L. Williams five hundred twenty dollars on account.

GEORGE M. LYMAN.

[Receipt in full]

$325. SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., July, 1901.

Received of John Cotton three hundred twenty-five dollars in full of all demands to date.

GERALD NORTON.

[Bills]

Boston, Mass., March 12, 1901.

Mr. Alfred Lee,

Bought of Henderson & Lewis.

	40 tons Coal	@ $4.75	$190	00		
	20 cords Wood	@ 3.25	65	00		
					$255	00

New York, Jan. 1, 1901.

Mr. Henry Fitzgerald,

To James Brown, Dr.

1900						
Nov.	3	To 10 lbs. Coffee	@ 35c.	$3	50	
	22	" 11 lbs. Lard	@ 9c.		99	
Dec.	5	" 25 lbs. Sugar	@ 5c.	1	25	
	12	" 2 lbs. Tea	@ 65c.	1	30	
					$7	04

Jan. 12, 1901. Received Payment,

James Brown.

When a bill is paid, it is receipted by writing at the bottom the date of payment and the words *Received Payment*, followed by the name of the person or firm rendering the account. If a clerk has authority to sign his employer's name, he signs his own name (preceded by the word *by* or *per*) under that of his employer.

ENGLISH PROSODY

There are conflicting theories of English prosody, and no satisfactory system of indicating our verse-structure has yet been devised. The fact is that the movements of English metre are too varied and too delicate to be represented without a very complicated set of symbols. Pauses and quantity undoubtedly play their part in English versification; but it is almost impossible to reduce these elements to a system. In this brief sketch of prosody the simplest method of indicating verse-structure is followed. Pauses (except the cæsura) are not considered, and quantity is also ignored. The scansion adopted is only a rough-and-ready indication of the general movement of the verse. It is, however, sufficient for the purposes of an elementary classification. The teacher will of course consult such works as Schipper's "Handbuch der Englischen Metrik," Guest's "History of English Rhythms," Mayor's "English Metre," and Lanier's "English Verse," and he will find Gummere's "Handbook of Poetics" of great practical value. He must be prepared, however, to discover that doctors disagree, for the whole subject is far from settled, even in the minds of the "best authorities."

Prosody treats of the structure and movement of verse.

METRE

Poetry, as distinguished from prose, has **metre.**

In other words, the syllables are arranged in little groups of similar length and structure, called **feet**; and a certain number of feet make a line, or **verse.**

The number of feet in a verse differs in different kinds of poetry; but the variations are governed by the laws of prosody.

Often, also, the lines or verses are grouped into larger units, also in accordance with regular laws of measure. Such units are **couplets** and **stanzas** (see pp. 476, 479).

Poetry, therefore, has a **regularly measured** movement, whereas prose is free to move as the purpose of the writer or speaker may suggest.

The word *metre* is derived from the Greek *mĕ́trŏn*, "measure," through the Latin (*metrum*) and the French (*mètre*).

The separation of a verse into its metrical parts, or **feet**, is called **scansion**. The corresponding verb is *to scan*.

The scansion of a verse is only a rough method of indicating its metrical structure. It results in a kind of singsong which often misrepresents the actual effect of the verse in expressive reading.

KINDS OF FEET

English metre depends in the main upon **rhythm**, — that is, upon a regular arrangement of accented and unaccented syllables.

The unit of metrical structure is the **foot**.

There are several kinds of metrical feet. The most important are the **trochee** (´ ×),[1] the **iambus** or **iamb** (× ´), the **dactyl** (´ × ×), the **anapæst** (× × ´), and the **spondee** (´ ´).

The **trochee** consists of an accented followed by an unaccented syllable (´ ×).

´ × | ´ × | ´ × | ´ ×
Tall and stately in the valley. — LONGFELLOW, "Hiawatha."

´ × | ´ × | ´ × | ´ × | ´ × | ´ × | ´ ×
Ah, distinctly I remember, it was in the bleak December.

POE, "The Raven."

The **iambus** is the opposite of the trochee. It consists of an unaccented followed by an accented syllable (× ´).

× ´ | × ´ | × ´ | × ´ | × ´
I blame you not for praising Cæsar so.

SHAKSPERE, "Julius Cæsar," Act III, Scene 1.

[1] The symbol ´ denotes an accented syllable; the symbol × denotes an unaccented syllable.

The **dactyl** consists of an accented syllable followed by two unaccented syllables (´ × ×).

´ × × | ´× × | ´ × ×| ´ × × | ´ × × | ´ × ×
Entered with serious mien and ascended the steps of the altar.

LONGFELLOW, "Evangeline," IV.

The **anapæst** is the opposite of the dactyl. It consists of two unaccented syllables followed by an accented syllable (× × ´).

× × ´ | × × ´ | × × ´
Never sick, never old, never dead.

The **spondee** consists of two syllables, both stressed (´ ´).

´ ´ | × ´ | × ´ | × ´
Draws diff'rent threads, and late and soon

´ ´ | × ´ | × ´ | × ´
*Spins, toil*ing out his own cocoon.

TENNYSON, "The Two Voices."

In many cases one may be in doubt between a **trochee** and a **spondee**. A spondee is never absolutely required by the rules of English verse. Hence a trochee may always be substituted. Even in hexameter, where trochees are inadmissible in Latin or Greek, English uses them freely (see p. 475). This is one of the reasons why it is hard to write an English hexameter that satisfies a classical scholar. With beginners, the distinction between trochees and spondees should not be much insisted on.

A verse that ends with an incomplete foot is said to be **catalectic**. Thus, —

´ × | ´ × | ´ ×| ´ ^
When shall we three meet again?

SHAKSPERE, "Macbeth," Act I, Scene 1.

The absence of the last part of the foot may be indicated by a caret (^), as in the example. The omission of a syllable is sometimes regarded as analogous to a **rest** in music.

An unaccented syllable after the last iambus does not affect the general structure or the classification of the line. This syllable is often called an extra syllable, and the verse is often said to be hypermetrical ("over the measure").

Thus the first of the two following verses is classed as a deca-syllabic verse, though it actually has eleven syllables by reason of the "extra syllable."

× ⁄ | × ⁄ | × ⁄ | × ⁄ | × ⁄ | ×
Do faithful homage and receive free honors.

SHAKSPERE, "Macbeth," Act III, Scene 6.

Such extra syllables are always found in iambic verse which has feminine rhyme (p. 473).

Substitutions of one foot for another are extremely common in English verse.

The various feet will be abundantly illustrated in the examples of couplets and of stanzaic structure which follow (pp. 476–85). Observe the numerous substitutions.

A verse is named from its prevailing foot, — **trochaic, iambic, dactylic, anapæstic.**

A verse of one foot is called a **monometer**; one of two feet, a **dimeter**; of three, a **trimeter**; of four, a **tetrameter**; of five, a **pentameter**; of six, an **hexameter.**

The name *hexameter* is usually restricted to the dactylic hexameter (see p. 475).

Examples of **dimeters**, etc., will be found in the stanzas quoted below (pp. 479–85). The seventh verse in the following passage is an iambic **monometer** (× ⁄):

When icicles hang by the wall,
  And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
  And milk comes frozen home in pail;
When blood is nipped, and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl
    "Tuwhoo!
"Tuwhit! tuwhoo!" A merry note!
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

SHAKSPERE, "Love's Labor's Lost," Act V, Scene 2.

CÆSURA

Most verses are divided into two parts by a metrical pause, called the **cæsura**, which may or may not coincide with a pause in the sense or with the end of a foot.

The cæsura is indicated by the symbol ‖.

The place of the cæsura varies in different kinds of verse and often in different verses of the same general structure. In many cases there may be a difference of opinion as to where it falls.

Some verses have two cæsuras.

For examples of the cæsura, see pp. 474–85.

RHYME

English versification makes frequent use of a peculiar correspondence between the sounds of different words. This is known as **rhyme.**[1]

The usage of modern English poetry requires, for a perfect rhyme, that the words shall agree in their vowel sound and in any consonant sound that follows the vowel, but that they shall not agree in the consonant sound that precedes the vowel. The rhyming syllables must also have the same accent.

Thus, — three, tree; six, sticks; old, bold; remain, constrain; nation, reputation; bough, now; beau, show.

When the rhyming syllables are complete words (*monosyllables*) or final accented syllables, the rhyme is called **single,** or **masculine.**

Thus, — well, fell; brand, banned; say, obey; ill, fulfíl; inspíre, choir; sure, secúre; deceíve, beliéve; change, deránge; befóre, adóre; wood, understoód; indeéd, proceéd; cavaliér, hear.

When the rhyme includes both an accented and a following (unaccented) syllable, it is called a **double** or **feminine** rhyme.

[1] The word is here restricted to *end-rhyme,* in accordance with ordinary usage. For alliteration, see p. 486.

Thus, — swínging, ríinging; decíded, guíded; steády, reády; defénces, sénses; fáster, alabáster; contradíction, convíction; exáctly, compáctly.

NOTE. — The unaccented syllable may be an independent monosyllabic word. Thus, — sénd it, ménd it; chárm him, hárm him; saíd it, crédit; cértain, désert in, alért in (Byron); o'erthrówn be, Macónë (Byron).

> A wight he was whose very *sight would*
> Entitle him "Mirror of *Knighthood.*" — BUTLER, "Hudibras," I, 1.

In a **triple rhyme** the accented syllable is followed by two unaccented syllables.

Thus, — fúrious, injúrious; rávelling, trávelling; geógraphy, topógraphy; párticle, árticle.

Triple rhymes are rare in serious poetry. In humorous verse they are often whimsically used for comic effect.

> I have seen Napoleon, who seemed quite a *Júpiter*,
> Shrink to a Saturn. I have seen a duke
> (No matter which) turn politician *stúpider*,
> If that can well be, than his wooden look.
> But it is time that I should hoist my "*blúe Peter*"
> And sail for a new theme. — BYRON.

Blank verse is verse without rhyme. The term is specially applied to unrhymed iambic verse of ten syllables, like that of Shakspere and Milton.

> × / | × / | × || / | × / | × /
> Thus they their doubtful consultations dark
> Ended, rejoicing in their matchless chief:
> As, when from mountain tops the dusky clouds
> Ascending, while the north wind sleeps, o'erspread
> Heav'n's cheerful face, the low'ring element
> Scowls o'er the darkened landskip snow or shower,
> If chance the radiant sun, with farewell sweet,
> Extend his ev'ning beam, the fields revive,
> The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
> Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.
>
> MILTON, "Paradise Lost," Book II, verses 486–95.

In the example observe the substitution of a trochee (/ ×) for an iambus (× /) in verses 2 (*énded*) and 6 (*scówls o'er*).

Blank verse is very monotonous if there is a pause at the end of nearly every line, — that is, if all or most of the verses are "end-stopped." Thus, —

> There resteth all. But if they fail thereof,
> And if the end bring forth an ill success,
> On them and theirs the mischief shall befall, —
> And so I pray the gods requite it them,
> And so they will, for so is wont to be.
>
> SACKVILLE, "Gorboduc," Act I, Scene 1.

An intermixture of "run-on lines" (that is, of lines which have no pause at the end) is necessary to give blank verse an agreeable variety. Thus, —

> If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
> It were done quickly. If th' assassination
> Could trammel up the consequence, and catch
> With his surcease, success, that but this blow
> Might be the be-all and the end-all here, —
> But here, upon this bank and shoal of time, —
> We'd jump the life to come.
>
> SHAKSPERE, "Macbeth," Act I, Scene 7.

The extra syllable (p. 471) is also used to vary the structure of blank verse (as in the second line of the preceding example).

Blank verse is one of the commonest of English metres, especially in the drama (as in Shakspere) and in narrative poems (as "Paradise Lost"). The following well-known works are in blank verse: — Young's "Night Thoughts"; Cowper's "Task"; Thomson's "Seasons"; Byron's "Manfred"; Keats's "Hyperion"; Wordsworth's "Excursion"; Tennyson's "Princess," "Idylls of the King," and "Enoch Arden."

Unrhymed **dactylic hexameters** are sometimes used in narrative poetry, as in Longfellow's "Evangeline." Thus, —

´ × ×| ´ × | ´ ‖ × × | ´ × × | ´ × × | ´ × ×

Oft on autumnal eves when without in the gathering darkness
Bursting with light seemed the smithy, through every cranny and crevice,
Warm by the forge within they watched the laboring bellows.

The Greek and Latin hexameter consists of dactyls and spondees; in English, however, the so-called spondees in hexameter are usually trochees (see p. 471).

COUPLETS

A group of two rhymed lines of like metrical structure is called a **couplet.**

The commonest couplets are the **heroic** or **ten-syllable** (*decasyllabic*) couplet, and the **short** or **eight-syllable** (*octosyllabic*) couplet; but there are many other varieties.

1. The **ten-syllable** (*decasyllabic*) or **heroic couplet**; two iambic pentameters.

'Tis strange the miser should his cares employ[1]
To gain those riches he can ne'er enjoy:
Is it less strange the prodigal should waste
His wealth, to purchase what he ne'er can taste?

POPE, "Moral Essays," Epistle IV, verses 1–4.

Now while the silent workings of the dawn
Were busiest, into that selfsame lawn,
All suddenly, with joyful cries there sped
A troop of little children garlanded;
Who, gathering round the altar, seemed to pry
Earnestly round, as wishing to espy
Some folk of holiday; nor had they waited
For many moments, ere their ears were sated
With a faint break of music, which ev'n then
Filled out its voice, and died away again.

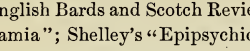
KEATS, "Endymion," Book I, verses 107–16.

The heroic couplet is susceptible of great variety and also of deadening monotony. It is one of the commonest of English rhythms. See, for example, many of Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales"; many passages in Shakspere; most of the poems of Dryden, Pope, and their school; Goldsmith's "Traveller" and

[1] The place of the cæsura often varies in different verses of the same extract. The scheme applies to the first verse in each case.

"Deserted Village"; Cowper's "Table Talk," etc.; Byron's "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers"; Keats's "Endymion" and "Lamia"; Shelley's "Epipsychidion," "Letter to Maria Gisborne," and "Julian and Maddalo"; Campbell's "Pleasures of Hope."

2. The **eight-syllable** (*octosyllabic*) **couplet**; two iambic tetrameters.



Soon as the midnight bell did ring,
Alone, and armed, forth rode the king
To that old camp's deserted round.
Sir knight, you well might mark the mound,
Left hand the town,—the Pictish race
The trench, long since, in blood did trace;
The moor around is brown and bare,
The space within is green and fair.
The spot our village children know,
For there the earliest wild flowers grow;
But woe betide the wandering wight
That treads its circle in the night!

SCOTT, "Marmion," Canto III, 23.

In the first line note the substitution of a trochee for an iambus in the first foot.

This couplet has been much used in narrative poetry, as in Chaucer's "House of Fame"; Gower's "Confessio Amantis"; Burns's "Twa Dogs" and "Tam O'Shanter"; Scott's "Lay of the Last Minstrel," "Marmion," and "Lady of the Lake"; Byron's "Giaour" and "Bride of Abydos"; Wordsworth's "White Doe of Rylstone."

The eight-syllable verse is often called **Hudibrastic,** from its use in Samuel Butler's satirical poem "Hudibras."

For rhetoric, he could not ope
His mouth but out there flew a trope;
And when he happen'd to break off
I' th' middle of his speech, or cough,
H' had hard words ready, to show why
And tell what rules he did it by;
Else, when with greatest art he spoke,
You 'd think he talk'd like other folk.

BUTLER, "Hudibras," Part I, Canto 1.

3. The seven-syllable trochaic couplet; two trochaic tetrameters catalectic.

Blessings on thee, little man,
Barefoot boy, with cheek of tan!
With thy turned up pantaloons,
And thy merry whistled tunes.

WHITTIER, "The Barefoot Boy."

Once again my call obey!
Prophetess, arise, and say
What dangers Odin's child await,
Who the author of his fate.

GRAY, "The Descent of Odin."

Four iambic feet may be substituted, as in the third verse of the extract from Gray (× ⁄ | × ⁄ | × ⁄ | × ⁄).

4. The fourteen-syllable iambic couplet.

'T was in the wilds of Lebanon, amongst its barren hills,—
To think upon it, even now, my very blood it chills!—
My sketch-book spread before me, and my pencil in my hand,
I gazed upon the mountain range, the red tumultuous sand,
The plumy palms, the sombre firs, the cedars tall and proud,—
When lo! a shadow passed across the paper like a cloud,
And looking up I saw a form, apt figure for the scene,
Methought I stood in presence of an oriental queen.

HOOD, "The Desert-Born."

Such verses are usually divided by the cæsura into two parts of eight and six syllables respectively.

5. Fifteen-syllable trochaic couplets; eight trochees, the last catalectic.

Yet I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns.

TENNYSON, "Locksley Hall."

Such verses are usually divided by the cæsura into two parts of eight and seven syllables respectively.

6. The sixteen-syllable trochaic couplet.

/ × | / × | / × | / × ‖ / × | / × | / × | / × |

Ah, distinctly I remember, it was in the bleak December.

POE, "The Raven."

Such verses are usually divided into halves by the cæsura. In "The Raven" the two halves rhyme.

7. The eleven-syllable anapæstic couplet; one iambus and three anapæsts.

× × / | × × / | × × ‖ × / | × × /

Here lies our good Edmund, whose genius was such,
We scarcely can praise it or blame it too much;
Who, born for the universe, narrowed his mind,
And to party gave up what was meant for mankind;
Though fraught with all learning, yet straining his throat
To persuade Tommy Townshend to lend him a vote.

GOLDSMITH, "Retaliation," verses 29–34.

The first foot may be either an iambus (as in the first three lines and the fifth) or an anapæst (as in the fourth and sixth lines). The cæsura is usually in the third foot, sometimes after the second (as in the fourth line).

STANZAS

A regular group of more than two verses is called a **stanza.**

A stanza is often less properly called a *verse.*

The number of possible varieties of stanza is unlimited.[1] Some of the most important kinds will now be mentioned.

1. Three-line stanza with a single rhyme; three iambic pentameters.

/ / | × / ‖ × / | × / | × /
× / | × / ‖ × / | × / | × /
× / | / / ‖ × / | × / | × /

Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow in the sky!
A young man will be wiser by and by;
An old man's wit may wander ere he die.

TENNYSON, "The Coming of Arthur."

In the first verse the first foot is distinctly spondaic (*rain rain*). No one would think of reading it as an iambus (*rain rain*).

[1] This variety is particularly exemplified in songs and other lyrical poems. See, for instance, Schelling's "Elizabethan Lyrics" and "Seventeenth Century Lyrics" and Palgrave's "Golden Treasury."

2. Four-line stanza consisting of two eight-syllable iambic couplets.

× × ⁄ | × × ⁄ | × ⁄ | × ⁄
× ⁄ | × ⁄ | × ⁄ | × ⁄

In the heart of the Hills of Life, I know
Two springs, that with unbroken flow
Forever pour their lucent streams
Into my soul's far Lake of Dreams.

LANIER, "My Springs."

The first two feet in the first verse are anapæsts.

3. Four-line stanza with alternate rhyme (*a b a b*[1]). Each verse consists of four iambs.

× ⁄ | × ⁄ ‖ × ⁄ | × ⁄

The merry world did on a day
With his train-bands and mates agree
To meet together where I lay
And all in sport to jeer at me.

GEORGE HERBERT, "The Quip."

4. The same as No. 3, but with feminine rhyme in the second and fourth verses.

× ⁄ | × ⁄ ‖ × ⁄ | × ⁄

The peeress comes. The audience stare,
And doff their hats with due submission.
She curtsies, as she takes the chair,
To all the people of condition.

GRAY, "A Long Story," stanza 28.

5. Four-line stanza rhyming alternately (*a b a b*). The first and third verses consist of four iambs; the second and fourth of three.

Around in sympathetic mirth
Its tricks the kitten tries;
The cricket chirrups in the hearth;
The crackling fagot flies.

GOLDSMITH, "The Hermit," stanza 14.

[1] The order of the letters indicates the order of the rhymes. Thus *a b a b* indicates that there are four verses in the stanzas, and two rhymes, and further that the first verse rhymes with the third and the second with the fourth.

6. The same as No. 5, except that the first and third lines do not rhyme.

The sun now rose upon the right:
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

COLERIDGE, "Ancient Mariner," Part II, stanza 1.

The dogs did bark, the children screamed,
Up flew the windows all;
And every soul cried out, "Well done!"
As loud as he could bawl. — COWPER, "John Gilpin."

7. Quatrains: a stanza consisting of four ten-syllable iambic lines, rhyming alternately (*a b a b*).

Their cries soon waken all the dwellers near;
Now murmuring noises rise in every street;
The more remote run stumbling with their fear,
And in the dark men jostle as they meet.

DRYDEN, "Annus Mirabilis," stanza 227.

Gray's "Elegy" is written in this stanza.

8. Four-line anapæstic stanza; the second and fourth verses rhyme.

× × ´ ‖ × × ´ | × ´
Know that Love is a careless child,
And forgets promise past;
He is blind, he is deaf when he list,
And in faith never fast.

His desire is a dureless content,
And a trustless joy;
He is won with a world of despair,
And is lost with a toy.

RALEIGH (?).

In the example the last foot in the first verse and in the sixth is an iambus; all the other feet in the two stanzas are anapæsts.

9. Four-line stanza; two anapæstic couplets.

× × ´ | × × ´ ‖ × × ´ | × ´
Macedonia sends forth her invincible race;
For a time they abandon the cave and the chase:
But those scarfs of blood-red shall be redder, before
The sabre is sheathed and the battle is o'er.

BYRON, "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage," Canto IV, Song after stanza 72.

10. Four-line stanza, rhyming *a b b a*; iambic; the stanza of Tennyson's "In Memoriam."

× ⏑ | × ⏑ | × ⏑ | × ⏑
We paused; the winds were in the beech;
We heard them sweep the winter land;
And in a circle, hand in hand,
Sat silent, looking each at each. — Section XXX.

There twice a day the Severn fills:
The salt sea-water passes by,
And hushes half the babbling Wye,
And makes a silence in the hills. — Section XIX.

To-night the winds begin to rise
And roar from yonder dropping day;
The last red leaf is whirl'd away,
The rooks are blown about the skies;

The forest crack'd, the waters curl'd,
The cattle huddled on the lea;
And, wildly dash'd on tower and tree,
The sunbeam strikes along the world. — Section XV.

11. Four-line stanza, with alternate rhyme (*a b a b*); iambic; verses 1–3 octosyllabic; verse 4 of four syllables.

⏑ × | × ⏑ ‖ × ⏑ | × ⏑
× ⏑ | × ⏑
Happy the man whose wish and care
A few paternal acres bound,
Content to breathe his native air
In his own ground. — POPE.

12. Five-line stanza; verses 1, 3, and 5 trochaic; verses 2 and 4 iambic.

⏑ × | ⏑ × | ⏑ × | ⏑ ∧
× ⏑ | × ⏑ | × ⏑ | × ∧
⏑ × | ⏑ × | ⏑ × | ⏑ ∧
× ⏑ | × ⏑ | × ⏑ | × ∧
⏑ × | ⏑ × | ⏑ × | ⏑ ∧

Who is Silvia? What is she,
That all our swains commend her?
Holy, fair, and wise is she;
The heaven such grace did lend her
That she might admirèd be.
SHAKSPERE, "Two Gentlemen of Verona."

13. Six-line stanza, consisting of four iambic eight-syllable lines rhyming alternately, followed by a couplet in the same metre (*a b a b c c*).

× ⁄ | × ⁄ ‖ × ⁄ | × ⁄
There is a change — and I am poor;
Your love hath been, nor long ago,
A fountain at my fond heart's door,
Whose only business was to flow;
And flow it did, not taking heed
Of its own bounty or my need.

WORDSWORTH, "A Complaint."

14. Six-line stanza rhyming *a a b c c b*; iambic; two octosyllabic couplets; a verse of three iambs; another couplet; a verse of three iambs.

× ⁄ | × ⁄ | × ⁄ | × ⁄
× ⁄ | × ⁄ | × ⁄
The youth of green savannahs spake,
And many an endless, endless lake
With all its fairy crowds
Of islands that together lie
As quietly as spots of sky
Among the evening clouds.

WORDSWORTH, "Ruth," stanza 12.

15. Six-line stanza of decasyllabic iambic verses, the first four rhyming alternately, the last two forming a couplet (*a b a b c c*).

× ⁄ | × ⁄ ‖ × ⁄ | × ⁄ | × ⁄
With sacrifice before the rising morn
Vows have I made by fruitless hope inspired;
And from the infernal gods, 'mid shades forlorn
Of night, my slaughtered lord have I required:
Celestial pity I again implore, —
Restore him to my sight — great Jove, restore!

WORDSWORTH, "Laodamia."

By all means use sometimes to be alone.
Salute thyself; see what thy soul doth wear.
Dare to look in thy chest, for 't is thine own,
And tumble up and down what thou find'st there.
Who cannot rest till he good fellows find,
He breaks up house, turns out of doors his mind.

GEORGE HERBERT, "The Church Porch," stanza 25.

16. Rhyme royal: seven-line stanza of decasyllabic iambic verses, rhyming *a b a b b c c.*

> And though your grenë youthë floure as yit,
> In crepeth age alwey, as stille as stoon,
> And death manáceth every age, and smit
> In ech estat, for ther escapeth noon:
> And al so certein as we knowe echoon
> That we shul deye, as úncertey̆n we allë
> Ben of that day when death shal on us fallë.
>
> CHAUCER, "The Clerk's Tale," stanza 10.

17. Eight decasyllabic iambic verses, rhyming *a b a b a b c c.*

> In the mid days of autumn, on their eves
> The break of winter comes from far away,
> And the sick west continually bereaves
> Of some gold tinge, and plays a roundelay
> Of death among the bushes and the leaves,
> To make all bare before he dares to stray
> From his north cavern. So sweet Isabel
> By gradual decay from beauty fell.
>
> KEATS, "Isabella," stanza 32.

18. Nine-line stanza (the Spenserian stanza), rhyming *a b a b b c b c c*; iambic; all decasyllabic except the last, which is an Alexandrine (× ⁄ | × ⁄ | × ⁄ ‖ × ⁄ | × ⁄ | × ⁄).

> Behold the merry minstrels of the morn,
> The swarming songsters of the careless grove,
> Ten thousand throats! that from the flowering thorn
> Hymn their good God, and carol sweet of love,
> Such grateful kindly raptures them emove:
> They neither plough nor sow; ne, fit for flail,
> E'er to the barn the nodden sheaves they drove;
> Yet theirs each harvest dancing in the gale,
> Whatever crowns the hill, or smiles along the vale.
>
> × ⁄ | × ⁄ | × ⁄ ‖ × ⁄ | × ⁄ | × ⁄
>
> THOMSON, "Castle of Indolence," Canto I, stanza 10

This stanza was first used by Spenser in "The Faerie Queene." It is also found in Byron's "Childe Harold," Keats's "Eve of St. Agnes," and many other poems.

19. Ten-line stanza, rhyming *a b a b c d e c d e*; all decasyllabic iambic verses, except the eighth, which is of six syllables.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the selfsame song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears among the alien corn;
The same that ofttimes hath
Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

KEATS, "Ode to a Nightingale."

A powerful effect is sometimes produced by rhyming together a considerable number of lines, as in the following extraordinary passage from Hood: —

Gold! gold! gold! gold!
Bright and yellow, hard and cold,
Molten, graven, hammered, and rolled;
Heavy to get and light to hold;
Hoarded, bartered, bought, and sold;
Stolen, borrowed, squandered, doled:
Spurned by the young, but hugged by the old
To the very verge of the churchyard mould—
Price of many a crime untold;
Gold! gold! gold! gold!
Good or bad a thousand-fold!

HOOD, "Miss Kilmansegg."

THE SONNET

The **sonnet** is not a stanza but a complete poem of fourteen ten-syllable iambic verses.

In the strict type of the sonnet (the so-called "Petrarchan type") the verses form two groups, — the **octave** (of eight verses) and the **sestet** (of six verses). The octave has two rhymes, arranged *a b b a, a b b a*. The

sestet has either two or three rhymes, which are different from those of the octave and are arranged either *c d c d c d* (as on page 105) or *c d e c d e*.

Cyriack, whose grandsire on the royal bench
Of British Themis, with no mean applause,
Pronounced, and in his volumes taught, our laws,
Which others at their bar so often wrench,
To-day deep thoughts resolve with me to drench
In mirth that after no repenting draws;
Let Euclid rest, and Archimedes pause,
And what the Swede intends, and what the French.
To measure life learn thou betimes, and know
Toward solid good what leads the nearest way;
For other things mild Heaven a time ordains,
And disapproves that care, though wise in show,
That with superfluous burden loads the day,
And, when God sends a cheerful hour, refrains. — MILTON.

Shakspere's sonnets are rhymed as follows, — *a b a b, c d c d, e f e f, g g.*

ALLITERATION

Words **alliterate** when they begin with the same sound or combination of sounds: as, — *m*erry *m*aiden, *l*ovely *l*ady, *sh*iver and *sh*ake, "*Pr*ide and *Pr*ejudice," "*S*ense and *S*ensibility."

Alliteration according to fixed rules was a characteristic of the oldest English (Anglo-Saxon) poetry, which seldom had end-rhyme. Regular alliteration without end-rhyme is also found in many poems of later date. Occasional alliteration often occurs in modern verse and is common in prose. Thus, —

When to the *s*essions of *s*weet *s*ilent thought
I *s*ummon up remembrance of things past,
I *s*igh the lack of many a thing I *s*ought,
And with old *w*oes new *w*ail my dear time's *w*aste.

SHAKSPERE, Sonnet XXX.

This brave o'erhanging *f*irmament, this majestical roof, *f*retted with golden *f*ire, — why, it appears no other thing to me than a *f*oul and pestilent congregation of vapors. — SHAKSPERE, "Hamlet," Act II, Scene 2.

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